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**INSURGENTS TO PRESIDENTS: CONTEMPORARY
CIVIL–MILITARY RELATIONS IN BRAZIL, EL
SALVADOR, AND URUGUAY**

by

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March 2016

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RELATIONS IN BRAZIL, EL SALVADOR, AND URUGUAY**

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ABSTRACT

This thesis analyzes contemporary civil–military relations in three Latin American countries: Brazil, El Salvador, and Uruguay. Since 2010, each country has elected a president who was previously an armed insurgent resisting authoritarian regimes of the 1970s and 1980s. Considering this phenomenon and evaluating recent trends across Latin America to expand military roles and missions, civil–military relations are assessed using a new framework. The framework, adapted from the “trinity” model employed by scholars at the Naval Postgraduate School’s Center for Civil–Military Relations, shows significant differences among the three cases and their respective degrees of positive civil–military relations; however, the specific phenomenon of electing a former insurgent to the presidency has not resulted in a significant deterioration of the relationship between the armed forces and their civilian executives. In fact, civil–military relations under ex-insurgent presidents have been improved over the last decade in each country. Ultimately, this thesis concludes that Uruguay has achieved the greatest degree of positive civil–military relations, and trends are presented for consideration in improving civil–military relations across the region.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ALBA	Alternativa Bolivariana para las Américas
ARENA	Alianza Republicana Nacionalista (El Salvador)
CARSI	Central American Regional Security Initiative (U.S.)
CCMR	Center for Civil–Military Relations (U.S.)
CODENA	Consejo de Defensa Nacional (Uruguay)
CNSCC	Consejo Nacional de Seguridad Ciudadana y Convivencia (El Salvador)
END	Estrategia Nacional de Defesa (Brazil)
ESG	Escola Superior de Guerra (Brazil)
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation (U.S.)
FMLN	Frente Farabundo Martí de Liberación Nacional (El Salvador)
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
MOD	Ministry of Defense
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
ORDEN	Organización Democrática Nacionalista (El Salvador)
PDT	Partido Democrático Trabalhista (Brazil)
PNC	Policía Nacional Civil (El Salvador)
PT	Partido dos Trabalhadores (Brazil)
UN	United Nations
UNPKO	United Nations Peacekeeping Operations

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I. INTRODUCTION

Since 2010, Brazil, El Salvador, and Uruguay have each elected presidents who, earlier in their lives, were active and armed insurgents. All three elected leaders were members of Marxist–Leninist insurgencies fiercely contested by their governments—hunted down and smoked out by use of military repression and various forms of torture and violence.

Authoritarianism swept across nearly all of Latin America in the 1970s and 1980s. In Brazil, a 21-year military regime left power in 1985, following a period of transition during which the military was still highly influential in state affairs. Hundreds of Brazilians were tortured and killed under military rule. Uruguay transitioned from a 12-year civilian-military authoritarian period in 1984. Hundreds of Uruguayans were tortured and killed during the authoritarian era. Neither of the South American countries experienced the levels of violence of nearby Argentina or Chile, but the repression resulted in thousands of people imprisoned, living in fear, or exiled from their homelands.¹

El Salvador’s military dictatorship dissolved into a 12-year civil war that began in 1979 and ended in 1992. In contrast to the other two cases studied in this thesis, over 70,000 Salvadorans were killed in its civil war with thousands more displaced—a civil war comparable to that of neighboring Guatemala. A map of Latin America is shown in Figure 1 with the three countries analyzed in this thesis highlighted.

¹ An official truth commission in Brazil accounts for 191 killed and 243 “disappeared,” while hundreds more were imprisoned. Uruguay’s statistics are not as well documented. Many Uruguayans suffered abuses in neighboring Argentina; estimates are between 3,000 and 4,000 imprisoned and several hundred killed or “disappeared.” Chapters II, III, and IV provide a brief account of each country’s military history during the authoritarian era up to the present.

Figure 1. Map of Latin America



Brazil (green), El Salvador (red), and Uruguay (blue) highlighted. Adapted from: “Latin America Outline Map,” accessed October 12, 2015, <http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/namerica/latinout.htm?ref=binfind.com/web>.

Today, nearly all nations in Latin America are democratic; however, the means by which democracy was restored and the process of political reconciliation differ significantly from country to country. While so much of the region shares a similar embattled experience of insurgency and state repression during the global Cold War, the democracies of contemporary Latin America vary significantly. Modern Brazil, El Salvador, and Uruguay differ greatly in population, geography, economic development, and security challenges. A glance at basic World Bank and United Nations statistics underscores how dissimilar these nations are (see Table 1). Brazil, the largest country in

Latin America, has been able to lift many of its people out of poverty in the last two decades but still struggles with high levels of crime. El Salvador, with the lowest Gross Domestic Product and income level, has seen crime increase dramatically over the last several years. While the statistic of 41 homicides per 100,000 people is high, a more recent and unofficial tally shows the homicide rate to be about 90 per 100,000.² Uruguay, the smallest country of the three by population, has the highest level of development and lowest level of crime.

Table 1. Key Country Statistics

	Population <i>(in millions)</i>	Gross Domestic Product <i>(in billions USD)</i>	Income Level <i>(per development indicators)</i>	Homicide Rate <i>(per 100K population)</i>
Brazil	202	\$2,346	Upper Middle Income	25
El Salvador	6.4	\$25	Lower Middle Income	41
Uruguay	3.4	\$58	High Income	8

While official estimates are not yet available for 2015, El Salvador's homicide rate is estimated to have increased to about 90 per 100K. Adapted from The World Bank, "2014 Database," <http://data.worldbank.org/>; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, "2013 Crime and Criminal Justice Statistics," <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/statistics/crime.html>.

Societal tensions from past eras of military repression and human rights abuse have mostly abated, but some important issues of civil-military relations are still unresolved. Additionally, over the last two decades, each country has expanded its military's roles and missions, especially in combatting internal crime and narco-trafficking as well as contributing to international peacekeeping operations. This thesis explores the dual-phenomenon of democratically elected ex-insurgent presidents and the expansion of military roles and missions. This comparative analysis of Brazil, El

² Jonathan Watts, "One Murder Every Hour: How El Salvador Became the Homicide Capital of the World," *The Guardian*, August 22, 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/aug/22/el-salvador-worlds-most-homicidal-place>.

Salvador, and Uruguay studies this dual-phenomenon to assess contemporary civil–military relations in each.

A. SIGNIFICANCE

In the United States and other NATO countries, a key component of civil–military relations is taken for granted—that of civilian control of the armed forces. As Thomas Bruneau points out in his 2015 article in *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, a misconception of civil–military relations in new democracies—where “civilian control is problematic”—leads to strategically “short-sighted” U.S. interaction with these developing countries.³ For the United States to have significant and mutually beneficial security assistance with the three countries studied in this thesis—or any other—there should be a deeper understanding of a foreign military’s power relative to its civil society and other state institutions, especially those designed to provide civilian control of the armed forces.

The significance of this thesis is threefold. First, the three countries analyzed are distinct geographically, economically, demographically, and historically providing a small yet diverse representation of Latin American states and their paths toward positive civil–military relations.⁴ It may be useful to apply lessons learned from Brazil, El Salvador, and Uruguay to other Latin American nations.

Second, Brazil, El Salvador, and Uruguay are three countries that recently elected presidents with insurgent pasts, a phenomenon that could be expected to cause civil–military relations to deteriorate. Scarred by troubled pasts with the military, have presidents struck back at their former adversaries? If so, how?

Third, in analyzing the three countries and the civil–military relations under ex-insurgent presidents, lessons could be applied in future electoral victories by ex-insurgent

³ Thomas Bruneau, “Challenges in building partner capacity: Civil-military relations in the United States and new democracies,” *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 26, no. 3 (2015), 429–445.

⁴ The term “*positive civil–military relations*” can take many interpretations; its use in this thesis is defined as “a set of institutions interacting in a single political structure, whereby civilian politicians actively assign, monitor, and control military roles and missions and the military effectively carries them out.” The varying definitions of civil–military relations are reviewed in the literature review of Section B, with an elaboration on this paper’s definition in Section C of this chapter.

politicians. It is possible—even likely—that other countries in the region will elect ex-insurgents to political office. While not studied in this thesis, Colombia elected a reconciled guerrilla fighter in 2014 to the office of mayor of its capital city, Bogotá, despite the fact that the main insurgent groups are still in conflict with the government. With so many citizens affected by military dictatorships in the not-so-distant past, and so many Latin Americans in some way resisting past military regimes, having a “story to tell” is still a message that resonates with many voters. The ongoing insurgencies in Colombia and Peru could result in a “new generation” of ex-insurgents brought into the mainstream political process. Lessons learned in the study of civil–military relations from Brazilian, Salvadoran, and Uruguayan ex-insurgents in political office could be applied to future cases.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

Civil–military relations in Latin America, in conjunction with recent transitions to democracy, are part of an evolving experience, differing in both methodology and maturity between countries. Much has been written on the subject by writers largely influenced by the two forefathers of American civil–military relations: Samuel Huntington and Morris Janowitz. Consensus among authors on how to improve Latin America’s civil–military relations is certainly not established, as there are multiple prescriptions on how to best improve relations or even how to properly measure success.

This section reviews the literature in three parts, presented chronologically by the preeminent theme in each era. Part 1 reviews the traditional arguments of professionalism as described during the Cold War, with a review of its applicability and level of success in Latin America. Part 2 reviews methods to institutionalize civilian control, particularly salient in the region during transitions from authoritarian military regimes to democratic civilian governments. Part 3, with the most contemporary literature on the subject, reviews the need for mature democracies in Latin America to redefine and reform the varying missions performed by their militaries.

1. Professionalism

Samuel Huntington asserted in 1957 that “professionalism distinguishes the military officer of today from the warriors of previous ages.”⁵ His work on civil–military relations describes a relationship between a professional officer corps and its civilian government as one of “objective civilian control,” which is enacted by “professionalizing the military, by rendering them politically sterile and neutral.”⁶ Huntington’s model called for high levels of military autonomy and segregation from the political sphere so as to be apolitical and impartial, focusing instead on the expertise in “the management of violence.”⁷ While an effective lens when peering into the relations of the United States military in its interactions with civilian politicians, scholars have pointed to several issues when applying Huntington’s model of civil–military relations to many of the United States’ southern hemispheric neighbors. The following paragraphs examine the challenges that Huntington’s and Janowitz’s professionalism theories face when applied to Latin America.

Latin America has a unique legacy of religious colonialism, effects of which can be traced to many institutions including its militaries. Colonial Latin America experienced a “fusion of administrative, judicial, and military authority,” which inserted the military officer into such non-military affairs as taxes, tariffs, and politics.⁸ After the winning of independence, national armies took on the role of guardians of *la patria* and even when constitutions were written to outline the responsibilities of various parts of government the armed forces became “virtually a fourth branch of government.”⁹ This is a sharp distinction between the North and South American colonial legacies. Latin American nations used “corporatist traditions to define civil–military relations [that]

⁵ Samuel Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil–Military Relations* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1957), 7.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 84.

⁷ Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, 15.

⁸ Brian Loveman, “Historical Foundations of Civil–Military Relations in Spanish America,” in *Civil–Military Relations in Latin America: New Analytical Perspectives*, ed. David Pion-Berlin (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 250–53.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 260–62.

emphasize military autonomy in spheres of military competence (effectively eliminating civilian authority in military affairs).”¹⁰

While Huntington’s call for military autonomy was for the removal *from* politics, the Latin American legacy presents the danger of placing the military *above* politics. Brazil is a well-documented study of the risk of a military that perceives itself to be above politics. The Brazilian military, in coordination with American military advisors, expanded studies at its *Escola Superior de Guerra* to articulate a curriculum of studies that would prepare officers and civilians to defeat both external and internal threats to national security; courses included, among others, political, economic, and military affairs.¹¹ “The new professionalism contributed to an all-embracing attitude of military managerialism in regard to Brazil’s political system.”¹² Professionalism, as Huntington described it, faces a legacy to overcome in Latin America, and has even been deemed a justification for military takeover of civilian government.

A second traditional type of professionalism was described by Morris Janowitz in 1960. Rather than creating an autonomous and apolitical military, Janowitz called for the socialization of the military with the political and civic spheres. This integration was crucial to constructing a “constabulary force” that, through its blending with civil society, develops shared common values, thereby professionalizing the military and alleviating tensions in civil–military relations.¹³ The notion that a socialization of Latin American militaries with other professional groups will improve civil–military relations has been questioned. For instance, recent history in Latin America saw the military step beyond a socialization with politics to an overthrow of them—certainly not the intended consequence of Janowitz’s professionalization. Even after return to democracy, the military remained a large force in the running of the state, whereby “handing over the

¹⁰ Joseph S. Nye Jr., “Epilogue: The Liberal Tradition,” in *Civil–Military Relations and Democracy*, eds. Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 155.

¹¹ Alfred Stepan, “The New Professionalism of Internal Warfare and Military Role Expansion,” in *Authoritarian Brazil: Origins, Policies, and Future*, ed. Alfred Stepan (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1973), 52–54.

¹² *Ibid.*, 55.

¹³ Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier* (New York: Free Press, 1971), 435–40.

presidency to a civilian did not in fact mean the military was returning to the barracks.”¹⁴ A lingering vision persists in Latin America of the guardian role of the military both in military ranks and in society at large.¹⁵ Deep-rooted tensions exist that cannot necessarily be overcome with increased socialization, especially when the prevalent norm may not be one of democratic civil–military relations as understood in the United States.

It has also been argued that increased socialization with Western militaries could prove beneficial to professionalization, especially through deployment abroad supporting peacekeeping operations. The experiences of Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay, however, have had mixed impacts on their respective civil–military relations. The type of mission conducted and the organizations with which the peacekeepers interacted determine whether the military socialization improved civil–military relations.¹⁶ For instance, according to Arturo Sotomayor, Argentina had positive impact from socialization in UN peacekeeping missions, largely due to socialization with more advanced (and often NATO) militaries from mature democracies. Brazil and Uruguay, on the other hand, socialized with militaries of other developing and transitional governments, thereby reinforcing internally oriented mission sets and lacking the benefits of “projecting proper, liberal, and democratic norms” to its participating military members.¹⁷ Hence, socialization as a means of professionalizing the military and improving civil–military relations has its limits and must be conducted both domestically and internationally with a well-implemented strategy.

2. Institutionalizing Civilian Control

Another method of improving civil–military relations is to solidify the institutions that guarantee civilian control of the armed forces. As Latin American nations transitioned to democracy in the 1980s and 1990s, constitutions were rewritten and

¹⁴ J. Samuel Fitch, “Military Attitudes toward Democracy in Latin America: How Do We Know If Anything Has Changed?,” in *Civil–Military Relations in Latin America: New Analytical Perspectives*, ed. David Pion-Berlin (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 59.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 67–78.

¹⁶ Arturo C. Sotomayor, *The Myth of the Democratic Peacekeeper: Civil–Military Relations and the United Nations* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 2014), 100.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 126.

democratic institutions were reestablished. Codifying in institutions the democratic norms and principles of positive civil–military relations is the ideal approach. Narcís Serra was instrumental in achieving this transition as Minister of Defense in post–Franco Spain from 1982 to 1991, but on a different continent with a different regional security environment. He claims that Spain successfully reformed its civil–military relations due to the civilian government “demonstrating that it could direct both defense and military policies, asserting political and organizational control over the military, progressively demanding that the armed forces be more effective, and laying the foundation for overcoming the conflicts that come with transition and achieving democratic status.”¹⁸ This level of reform is at best a long-term goal in most Latin American countries, and at worst naïve wishful thinking due to the relative weakness of state institutions and the lack of a powerful and wealthy community of NATO allies to incentivize such a costly task.

Instead, David Pion-Berlin identifies the default model of civil–military relations in Latin America: “Political civilian control is a low-cost means of achieving a relative calm in civil–military affairs without investing in extensive institution building, expertise, legislative oversight, and large budgets.”¹⁹ This type of civilian control requires personal connections between political and military leaders, whereby “presidents promote officers with whom they are familiar, have known via political party or familial connections, or who they surmise will be loyal to them.”²⁰ This form of civil–military relations calls for civilian leaders to be expert liaisons and negotiators, vice experts in defense policy and strategy.

In his critical response to Pion-Berlin’s “Political Management of the Military in Latin America,” Thomas Bruneau points to the expanding roles and missions assigned to militaries in the region: confronting internal conflict, engaging in peacekeeping missions

¹⁸ Narcís Serra and Marton Harsanyi, “The Military Transition: Democratic Reform of the Spanish Armed Forces,” in *Military Engagement: Influencing Armed Forces Worldwide to Support Democratic Transition*, ed. Dennis Blair (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2013), 323.

¹⁹ David Pion-Berlin, “Political Management of the Military in Latin America,” *Military Review* 85 (January-February 2005): 28.

²⁰ Ibid.

abroad, and taking part in U.S.-led counter-terrorism across the hemisphere.²¹ He states that

civilian policy makers not only manage the armed forces, but also decide on their roles and missions, whether those civilians want to or not and whether or not they are well informed...it is more important that they establish stable institutions that embody and perpetuate the expertise needed to deal with possible roles and missions as they arise. Only in this way can democratic governments deal with problems and crises in a routine and internationally acceptable manner.²²

In contrast to strengthening the democratic institutions that guarantee civilian control, an alternative prescription discussed by Kirk Bowman involves a shifting of power by means of downsizing and demilitarizing the armed forces. This argument claims that only demilitarization can reverse the trend of the region's armed forces acting as a "substantial and significant negative effect on democracy, economic growth, and equity in Latin America."²³ The argument looks at Costa Rica and Honduras, underscoring how divergent policy in civil-military relations has been a leading factor to the development of the former and the economic and political stagnation of the latter.²⁴ While a look at each country's GDP may at first seem to strengthen this argument,²⁵ the 1948 abolition of Costa Rica's military is but one of many causal factors to describe Costa Rica's more developed status—others include Costa Rica's early 20th Century land reform and decades of political and economic liberalization.

Brazil in the 1990s, on the other hand, has been cited as a case whereby civilian control of the armed forces was insured via its weak democratic institutions that based electoral success on "patronage and endorsement of popularity-enhancing platforms,

²¹ Thomas C. Bruneau, "Civil-Military Relations in Latin America: The Hedgehog and the Fox Revisited," *Revista Fuerzas Armadas y Sociedad* 19, no. 1(2005): 113–18.

²² *Ibid.*, 121.

²³ Kirk S. Bowman, *Militarization, Democracy, and Development: The Perils of Praetorianism in Latin America* (State College: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002), 4.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 4.

²⁵ Costa Rica's 2014 GDP was \$49.55B compared to Honduras' GDP of \$19.39B, according to the World Bank.

practices that are likely to be at odds with military preferences.”²⁶ Brazilian politicians, motivated by rational-choice decision making, have been successful in reducing “the political and economic space the military occupy” by cutting the size and spending on the military in favor of other voter-preferred programs.²⁷

One additional example of the weakening of the military as an institution is Argentina. Drawing a comparison between post-authoritarian neighbors, Argentina and Chile, Zoltan Barany describes that

in Chile democratizers have succeeded in gradually reducing the military’s political autonomy to a level acceptable by democratic standards. Their Argentine colleagues, on the other hand, have gone too far in what has amounted to a virtual vendetta against the military as an institution and, in the process, seriously impaired its ability to protect and project Argentine national interests.²⁸

There is no consensus on which method is preferred: the strengthening of democratic institutions or the weakening of the military’s influence in state affairs. There is consensus, however, that civil–military relations in Latin America following the return to democracy must insure civilian control of the armed forces. Other components of positive civil–military relations are the military’s effective exercise of its assigned roles and missions.

3. Redefining and Reforming Military Missions

The civil–military relations priority during Latin American transitions to democracy was creating a guarantee that militaries would become subject to new civilian governments. In most Latin American nations, democracy has been established as “the only game in town”; that is, by most accounts, most Latin American governments are now “consolidated democracies.”²⁹ This third section builds on the previous two but will

²⁶ Wendy Hunter, *Eroding Military Influence in Brazil: Politicians Against Soldiers* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 24.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 142.

²⁸ Zoltan Barany, *The Soldier and the Changing State: Building Democratic Armies in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012), 143.

²⁹ J. J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, “Toward Consolidated Democracies,” *Journal of Democracy* 7, no. 2 (1996): 14–33.

entail the focus of the research conducted in this thesis as it addresses the most contemporary and ongoing debates in Latin American civil–military-relations.

A key first distinction between missions as they relate to civil–military relations is between those externally versus internally focused. This distinction has been cited as a structurally problematic source of tension by Michael Desch. The “internal orientation” of Latin American militaries may serve as an inherent threat to civilian control and democracy because their internally focused roles and missions “linked military institutional interests to the level of internal economic development and the course of domestic politics.”³⁰ According to Desch, with few external threats to the state, Latin America often finds itself in the “worst” category of civil–military relations due to militaries facing high domestic threats with low external ones.³¹ While this environment may not change significantly in Latin America—especially with limited possible scenarios of inter-state armed conflict³²—not all scholars agree in an inward-oriented military equating to ill-fated civil–military relations.

Operations that the armed forces across Latin America are called to carry out can be categorized as national defense, internal security, development, or international security.³³ Contrary to the common hypothesis that internally focused and expansive (i.e., prone to “mission creep”) operations would yield worse civilian control, data spanning across South America shows cases of poor civilian control in restrictive and external operations as well as high civilian control in expansive and internal operations.³⁴ This puts to rest some of the concerns presented by Desch regarding civilian control of the military. There exist, however, other negative effects of a military with internally focused operations:

³⁰ Michael C. Desch, *Civilian Control of the Military: The Changing Security Environment* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 101.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 115–120.

³² Arie M. Kacowicz, *Zones of Peace in the Third World: South America and West Africa in Comparative Perspective* (New York: State University of New York, 1998); Felix E. Martin, *Militarist Peace in South America: Conditions for War and Peace* (New York: Palgrave, 2006).

³³ David Pion-Berlin and Craig Arceneaux, “Decision Makers or Decision Takers? Military Missions and Civilian Control in Democratic South America,” *Armed Forces and Societies* 26, no. 3 (Spring 2000): 422–24.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 429–432.

when militaries enmesh themselves in activities such as infrastructure building, medical extension services, or environmental protection, they are filling roles normally reserved for civilians. If such activities impede the growth of civilian organizations, then they harm the chances for balanced, long-term development by weakening civil society.³⁵

Due to weak state capacity to confront such challenges as humanitarian assistance and disaster relief as well as growing domestic security concerns, Latin American democracies have little choice but to employ their militaries domestically; however, in these circumstances, methods can be and have been employed to sustain civilian control.

The militaries in Ecuador and Peru have been described as elevating missions above the priority of the state and its citizenry in order to seek material benefits; the power of oil and natural gas companies as well as U.S. Southern Command influences in the region have enticed officers to “allocate troops not according to technical decisions regarding national security interests but rather according to who can and will reimburse the army for its services.”³⁶ Poor mission performance was displayed by the Peruvian army when tasked with conducting counter-insurgency operations against the Shining Path; the army often shied away from conflict and sheepishly patrolled the known sources of the insurgent group despite civilian leadership’s call for action.³⁷ State-assigned mission performance, therefore, should be a key indicator for positive civil–military relations in Latin America.

A framework for assessing civil–military relations by some scholars at the Naval Postgraduate School’s Center for Civil Military Relations (CCMR) is a “trinity” of conditions: democratic control, effectiveness, and efficiency.³⁸ Democratic control includes civilian control but then builds on it to include congressional oversight and institutional capacity via a ministry of defense or equivalent; effectiveness is the

³⁵ Pion-Berlin and Arceneaux, “Decision Makers or Decision Takers?.., 433.

³⁶ Maiah Jaskoski, “Army for Rent, Terms Negotiable,” *Berkeley Review of Latin American Studies* (Spring 2009), 49.

³⁷ Maiah Jaskoski, “Civilian Control of the Armed Forces in Democratic Latin America: Military Prerogatives, Contestation, and Mission Performance in Peru,” *Armed Forces and Society* 38, no. 1(2012).

³⁸ Thomas C. Bruneau and Scott D. Tollefson, eds., *Who Guards the Guardians and How: Democratic Civil–Military Relations* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2006); Thomas C. Bruneau and Richard B. Goetze, “Civil–Military Relations in Latin America,” *Military Review* (September-October 2006).

military's carrying out of civilian-assigned roles and missions; efficiency is the ability to carry out the roles and missions without excessive monetary waste to the government.³⁹ The need for clear guidance from democratically elected civilians and the costs of not having such guidance result in a "lack of clarity over what roles and missions should be, and how to implement changes"; governments will otherwise "have no clear idea of what defense 'product' they are paying for."⁴⁰

An issue in Latin America, however, is an "Attention Deficit" whereby civilian politicians pay little attention to defense issues because of the relatively peaceful region and the "low importance that voters assign to the provisions of the national defense as either a public or private good."⁴¹ Ultimately, if Latin American states aspire to be consolidated democracies then elected officials cannot sidestep their responsibilities in properly assigning the armed forces roles and missions that further national interests. Civil-military relations in consolidated democracies of Latin America should reach a point where

further issues of civil-military relations will be similar to those in other democracies throughout the world. They become 'management' problems revolving around the balance of power and force and the inherent tension between democracy and expertise...it is how governments deal with these issues that constitutes the crux of civil-military relations and will determine not only how successful civilians are in controlling armed forces but also how effective these forces will be in fulfilling the increasingly varied roles and missions that are assigned to them.⁴²

Civil-military relations have matured at different rates across Latin America, much like the region's young democratic institutions. While the region has few examples

³⁹ Bruneau and Goetze, "Civil-Military Relations in Latin America," 70-71.

⁴⁰ Thomas C. Bruneau and Harold Trinkunas, "International Democracy Promotion and Its Impact on Civil-Military Relations," in *Global Politics of Defense Reform* (New York: Palgrave, 2008), 62-63.

⁴¹ David Pion-Berlin and Harold Trinkunas, "Attention Deficits: Why Politicians Ignore Defense Policy in Latin America," *Latin America Research Review* 42, no. 3(October 2007).

⁴² Thomas C. Bruneau, "Introduction," in Thomas C. Bruneau and Scott D. Tollefson eds., *Who Guards the Guardians and How: Democratic Civil-Military Relations* (Austin, TX: Austin, TXUniversity of Texas Press, 2006), 3.

of relapses to military and authoritarian rule,⁴³ deteriorating public security and trans-national criminal activity provide the greatest challenges to positive civil–military relations and continued democracy. In 2015, then-commander of U.S. Southern Command, General John Kelly, remarked that

any government has an absolute responsibility to provide security to its people, and if they're so overwhelmed by crime that their police, whether they're clean or not...can't keep up with it and you have a military that can help I don't see a country having any alternative. It is very interesting to me in many of the countries that I work in that the military...are considered to be the most respected, admired, and effective parts of the government.⁴⁴

Trust in the military is evaluated as high, however, in relative terms when compared to other largely unpopular government agencies, and the levels of trust in the military vary significantly from country to country, as is shown in this thesis.

Civilian governments in Latin America face the need to continue providing public security to its citizenry. A state's failure to provide security within its borders could see a society give in to a fear of social violence whereby citizens look for other means to acquire security.⁴⁵ Much like Colombia of only a decade ago, parts of Mexico provide a troubling, contemporary example of civilians forming autonomous defense forces—called *autodefensas*—in the absence of a capable government and the rule of law.⁴⁶

⁴³ Notable exceptions are the 2009 military coup ousting Honduran president Manuel Zelaya, the 2012 congressional removal of Paraguayan president Fernando Lugo and many of his loyal senior officers, and the increasingly authoritarian conditions in Venezuela; Rut Diamint “The Military Question Reexamined,” in *Debating Civil–Military Relations in Latin America*, eds. David Mares and Rafael Martinez (Brighton, Great Britain: Sussex Academic Press, 2014).

⁴⁴ John F. Kelly, “The Future of U.S. Defense Cooperation in Latin America,” (speech, Atlantic Council Commanders Series in Washington, DC, May 19, 2015), <http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/events/webcasts/the-future-of-us-defense-cooperation-in-latin-america>.

⁴⁵ Rut Diamint, “Estado y Sociedad Civil ante la Cuestión Cívico-Militar,” in *Control Civil y Fuerzas Armadas en las Nuevas Democracias Latinoamericanas* ed. Rut Diamint (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Universidad Torcuato Di Tella Press, 1999), 53.

⁴⁶ Kimberly Heinle, et al., “Citizen Security in Michoacán,” Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars: Mexico Institute, Washington, DC, January 2015; Michael Hoopes, “Citizen Security as an Informal Institution: A Mexican Case Study,” *Small Wars Journal*, September 9, 2015.

Another disturbing phenomenon exists in parts of rural Central and South America, where lynch mobs carry out expedient justice due to a void of competent state agencies.⁴⁷

In recent years, Latin American militaries have been increasingly called on to aid in the effort of providing domestic security. Under these circumstances there is a heightened need to maintain positive civil–military relations—and the task is shared by civilian leaders in their assignment and oversight of roles and missions as well as the military’s effective execution of those missions.

While the literature on civil–military relations in Latin America has started to evaluate the expanded roles and missions of the military, more study is required on mission effectiveness—both in how effectively the military undertakes the missions and how astutely civilian governments assign and oversee them.

The political phenomenon of “Bolivarianism” or “radical populism” in Latin America has garnered significant attention among scholars and the media. In fact, Deborah Norden has studied the effects that three populist presidents—Hugo Chávez of Venezuela, Rafael Correa of Ecuador, and Evo Morales of Bolivia—have had on civil–military relations. She predicts that “the nature of the government to which the armed forces owe their loyalty has changed drastically. Given this political transformation, one would expect commensurate tensions in the sphere of civil–military relations.”⁴⁸ Norden’s assessment is troubling, as she finds that all three militaries have “expanded roles and prerogatives” and that “the leaders who will ultimately replace these three strongly personalistic populist leaders—whether sooner or later—will inevitably face highly politicized militaries, with broadly defined roles and substantial budgets.”⁴⁹

While much attention has been given to the “Bolivarian Revolution” among some Latin American nations in the last decade, a quieter phenomenon goes understudied—that

⁴⁷ María Cristina Fernández García, “Lynching in Guatemala: Legacy of War and Impunity,” Harvard University (2004); Daniel M. Goldstein, “‘In Our Own hands’: Lynching, Justice, and the Law in Bolivia,” *American Ethnologist* 30, (February, 2003).

⁴⁸ Deborah L. Norden, “The Making of Socialist Soldiers: Radical Populism and Civil–Military Relations in Venezuela, Ecuador and Bolivia,” in David Mares and Rafael Martinez (eds) *Debating Civil–Military Relations in Latin America* (London: Sussex Academic Press, 2014), 156.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 177.

of the presidential electoral victories of former insurgents. This thesis continues the study of effectiveness in newly assigned military missions while also undertaking the intriguing and overlooked task of ex-insurgent presidents and their effect on civil–military relations.

C. FRAMEWORK

The research of this thesis first presents a new methodology to assess contemporary civil–military relations in Brazil, El Salvador, and Uruguay. But first, a working definition of “positive civil–military relations” is proposed. The definition draws from Thomas Bruneau who submitted that civil–military relations are a “balance between democratic civilian leadership and military effectiveness in achieving roles and missions.”⁵⁰ This view highlights both the need for an engaged corps of elected, civilian leaders as well as a competent and professional military that obeys civilian control. For this analysis, *positive civil–military relations is a set of institutions interacting in a single political structure, whereby civilian politicians actively assign, monitor, and control military roles and missions and the military effectively carries them out.*

Building on the “trinity” framework developed by Thomas Bruneau, Cristiana Matei, and other scholars of the Naval Postgraduate School’s CCMR, an adjusted three-pillar model is proposed. The CCMR “trinity” has been described and applied at length in *Who Guards the Guardians and How* and more recently in the *Routledge Handbook of Civil–Military Relations*.⁵¹ As described in the preceding literature review, the “trinity” consists of Democratic Control, Effectiveness, and Efficiency. For the analysis of this thesis, the first two pillars remain largely unchanged; however, Efficiency is replaced with the new pillar of Democratic Incorporation of the Military.

The reason for this change is twofold. First, efficiency is difficult to measure and accurately assess. This shortfall is acknowledged by the CCMR scholars and is often assessed on a whole-of-government analysis of Supreme Auditing Institutions. In order to

⁵⁰ Thomas C. Bruneau, “Introduction,” in Thomas C. Bruneau and Scott D. Tollefson eds., *Who Guards the Guardians and How: Democratic Civil–Military Relations* (Austin, TX: Austin, TX University of Texas Press, 2006), 1.

⁵¹ Thomas C. Bruneau and Scott D. Tollefson, eds., *Who Guards the Guardians and How: Democratic Civil–Military Relations* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2006); Thomas C. Bruneau and Florina Cristiana Matei, eds., *Routledge Handbook of Civil–Military Relations* (London: Routledge, 2012).

focus the assessment more narrowly on civil–military relations—and to aim at a target with more measurable metrics—the pillar is replaced in the proposed framework. Second, neither of the other two pillars in the CCMR framework sufficiently analyzes the military as an instrument of the state working in conjunction with other tools of the state. That is, positive civil–military relations should feature a military institution that works toward broader national goals and interests. For this, the new pillar of Democratic Incorporation of the Military is introduced.

To assess the three countries and determine the extent to which positive civil–military relations can be observed, the framework shown in Table 2 is used. Each field is assessed as Low, Medium, or High based on its impact on achieving positive civil–military relations.

Table 2. Civil–Military Relations Framework

	Democratic Incorporation of the Military	Democratic Oversight of the Military	Military Effectiveness under Democracy
Brazil			
El Salvador			
Uruguay			

1. Democratic Incorporation of the Military

Column 1 is assessed based on a review of each country's constitution, legislation, military doctrine, and the relationship between the military and other state institutions to include the presidency. Three questions are asked:

- Are roles and missions subject to political whim or are they codified; that is, are military roles only *de facto* or are they also *de jure*?
- Have there been new restrictions imposed on the military (e.g., prohibiting law enforcement, removal from intelligence operations); that is, has the military been “shunned” or “quartered” under ex-insurgent presidents?
- Is the military incorporated into greater national policy, both domestic and foreign?

2. Democratic Oversight of the Military

Column 2 is assessed based on civilian oversight of military actions—both current missions and past abuses. Oversight mechanisms in the executive, legislative, and judicial realms are analyzed. Three questions are asked:

- Is there a civilian Minister of Defense and does he or she control the military and its budget?
- Do civilian politicians expend the required political capital to oversee military operations, or is there still a “lack of incentives?”
- Does the military operate within the legal framework—both presently and in accounting for the past era of military repression; that is, does the military receive exemptions or amnesty for current operations or past abuses?

3. Military Effectiveness under Democracy

Column 3 is assessed based on analyzing current and recent military operations, military budgets, and the relationship between the military and other state institutions. Three questions are asked:

- Does the military “creep” into unassigned roles or supplant non-military state capacity?
- Do democratic leaders supply their militaries with ample resources, especially as they assign them new roles and missions?
- Has the military successfully executed its democratically assigned missions?

D. THESIS OVERVIEW

The remainder of the thesis is presented in four additional chapters. Chapters II, III, and IV provide a brief military history of each country as well as a biography of the country's ex-insurgent president and status of contemporary civil–military relations. Chapter V applies the findings to the aforementioned framework and provides final trends and results.

II. BRAZIL

Brazil is the largest nation in Latin America and spends the most on its military. The military has played a unique role in Brazilian history. On the one hand, Brazil's independence from Portugal was a relatively peaceful process with little role for the military, especially as compared to the armed struggle for independence in Spanish America. On the other hand, the Brazilian military has intervened in domestic politics multiple times and has been described as "the moderating power" (*o poder moderador*) arbitrating between rival factions or replacing inept civilian regimes.⁵² This historical background provides a mixed foundation for contemporary civil–military relations. The first section of this chapter gives a brief military history of Brazil from 1964 to present. The second section offers a biography of ex-guerrilla and first-ever woman president of Brazil, Dilma Rousseff. The third section analyzes contemporary civil–military relations in Brazil. The chapter concludes with a depiction of President Rousseff as a stern commander-in-chief carefully continuing the legacy of using Brazil's military as a "handyman" for the homeland.

A. BRAZILIAN MILITARY HISTORY: 1964–PRESENT

In the 1960s, under civilian president João Goulart, Brazilian society was highly politicized and increasingly unsettled. Ideological divisions caused tensions that often manifested in workers' strikes and student protests. Very much aware of the successful socialist revolution in Cuba, the Brazilian military assessed domestic unrest and radicalism as a threat to national security. The Brazilian military developed a national security doctrine at its War College (*Escola Superior de Guerra*, or ESG) and educated military and civilians on a wide range of security topics such as intelligence, political affairs, psychological-social affairs, and even economic development.⁵³ A growing cadre

⁵² The "moderating" or arbitrating role assumed by the military may have been (informally) inherited from the Emperor of Brazil, as described by Charles Morazé and, later, Alfred Stepan; Charles Morazé, *Les Trois Ages du Brésil* (Paris, 1954); Alfred Stepan, *The Military in Politics: Changing Patterns in Brazil* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1971).

⁵³ Alfred Stepan, "The New Professionalism of Internal Warfare," 53–55.

of Brazilians associated with the ESG and other state institutions “became convinced that only an armed movement would put an end to populist anarchy and stop the spread of Communism.”⁵⁴ In April 1964, the Brazilian military launched a coup d’état that forced President Goulart into exile and began twenty-one years of military authoritarian rule.

While not as violent as the military dictatorships in Argentina and Chile, the Brazilian military did engage in many of the same purging activities to seek out and eliminate radicals and insurgents. The most intensive period was from 1968 to 1974 and has been referred to as the Leaden Years (*Anos de Chumbo*) due to the suspension of civil liberties, increased repression, and counterinsurgency operations by the military regime to include tortures and killings. A 2014 Brazilian Truth Commission report accounts for 191 killings and 243 disappearances during the dictatorship.

The military regime initiated a prolonged transition to democracy that began immediately following the *Anos de Chumbo*; moderate President (General) Ernesto Geisel began a program of mild relaxation of heavy-handed authoritarian rule, called *distensão*, and civil society was re-opened with a gradual restoration of liberties, called *abertura*. Brazilians elected a civilian president in 1985 and a new constitution was drafted in 1988. While the slow processes of *distensão* and *abertura* eventually led to democratic elections, the transition was largely guided by the military, allowing for continued military privileges such as amnesty for past human rights abuses and continued military management of some state enterprises. Furthermore, the first civilian presidents inherited a weak national economy that was plagued with very high inflation—an ailment that was not cured until then-Finance Minister (and later, President) Fernando Henrique Cardoso’s *Real Plan* in 1994.

The Brazilian government was slow to reform civil–military relations, largely because of the government’s focus on economic reforms. As noted by Reid, “the three separate military ministries were merged into a single defence ministry under civilian

⁵⁴ Boris Fausto, *A Concise History of Brazil* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 271.

control only in 2000—a decade or more after most Latin American countries.”⁵⁵ While the Brazilian military’s role as *o poder moderador* formally ended with the indirect democratic elections of 1985, the full transition of informal power and influence in government affairs did not occur until much later.

B. DILMA THE “IRON LADY” INSURGENT

In 2009, following the second four-year term held by Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, the Leftist *Partido dos Trabalhadores* (PT) nominated ex-guerrilla insurgent turned economist Dilma Rousseff. The following paragraphs provide a background of Rousseff.

Dilma Rousseff was raised in an upper-middle-class household to a Bulgarian immigrant father and Brazilian mother. During her university studies, Rousseff became politically active in a growing Leftist movement that resisted the military government of the 1960s and 1970s; she became a declared Marxist heavily involved with the underground insurgency. Her involvement was initially as an accomplice to robberies and weapons smuggling; later she became more influential as a leader of the Marxist–Leninist VAR Palmares insurgent group as a planner and organizer.⁵⁶ After her capture in 1970, Dilma was imprisoned for three years where she was brutally tortured using electric shocks and put in the notorious “parrot’s perch” being suspended from metal bars. She was finally released and allowed to return to school, despite withstanding torture and not giving interrogators information about her underground collaborators.

Dilma has spoken frequently about her experiences in her insurgent youth, often making comparisons to her political setbacks and the resolve she has to continue the struggle to achieve her political visions.⁵⁷ Furthermore, Dilma has rebuked critics of her guerrilla past, pointing to the courage of the insurgents and the barbarity of the military regime: “anyone who dared tell the truth to their torturers would compromise the lives of

⁵⁵ Michael Reid, *Brazil: The Troubled Rise of a Global Power* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 394.

⁵⁶ “Ex-guerrilheira é elogiada por militares e vista como ‘cérebro’ do grupo,” *Folha de São Paulo*, April 5, 2009, <http://www1.folha.uol.com.br/fsp/brasil/fc0504200907.htm>

⁵⁷ Jonathan Warrs and Bruce Douglas, “Dilma Rousseff: Can Brazil’s Fighter Survive the Turmoil?,” *The Guardian*, August 22, 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/aug/23/dilma-rousseff-brazil-president-impeach-scandal>

their friends. They would deliver them to their deaths.”⁵⁸ After completing her studies in economics, Dilma began a long career as a civil servant.

Dilma Rousseff first took public office in 1985 as the Secretary of the Treasury in the southern city of Porto Alegre. She later moved to the position of Secretary of Energy in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, as a part of the governing Democratic Labor Party (PDT). In 2000, she left the PDT to join the *Partido dos Trabalhadores*, which had been founded by the charismatic union leader turned politician Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. Rousseff was installed as the Minister of Energy in President Lula’s first term and, following the *mensalão* corruption scandal, was made Chief of Staff in 2005. The close relationship developed with President Lula ultimately led to his personal endorsement of Dilma Rousseff to become the PT’s nominee in the 2010 presidential election.

Dilma Rousseff has been portrayed as a stern leader lacking much of the charisma that buoyed her predecessor’s popularity. She has been called an “iron lady” not because of her insurgent past, but as a result of her public reprimands of her subordinates and her cold disregard of criticism. While this resolve can be a source of strength in times of adversity, her approach to the presidency has led to a more fractious political environment and a very disgruntled Brazilian population. Many critics point to Rousseff, a career technocrat resistant to political compromise, as the source of much of Brazil’s current economic and political woes. While this is too large a blame to put on one person, Dilma Rousseff has not helped dissuade her detractors.

C. CONTEMPORARY CIVIL–MILITARY RELATIONS IN BRAZIL

The Brazilian military regime led the slow transition back to democracy, retaining certain privileges after leaving power. After presidential elections in 1985, reforms to civil–military relations did not take place for many years. Brazil has a history of corrupt governance and high levels of patrimonialism—two phenomena that result in a cynical population toward Brazilian democracy. Only 48.5% of the population agrees that democracy is the most preferable form of government, according to regional pollster

⁵⁸ Helena de Moura, “Dilma Rousseff: From Fugitive Guerrilla to Brazil’s New President,” *CNN*, November 1, 2010, <http://www.cnn.com/2010/WORLD/americas/10/31/brazil.winner.profile/>

Latinobarometro.⁵⁹ Looking deeper into polling data reveals seemingly paradoxical results: Brazilians have very high trust in their armed forces (third highest in Latin America), yet are the most adamant among Latin Americans that the armed forces should not govern.⁶⁰ Much like the puzzling polling data, the Brazilian government seems to have mixed ideas on how to maintain and utilize its military.

It is well known that Brazil is a large country by many measurements (e.g., population, land mass, Gross Domestic Product). A common criticism of Brazil has been an inability to utilize this strength of size by way of regional or global leadership.⁶¹ While issues such as political instability, rampant inflation, or a large percentage of its population living in poverty have been hindrances in the past, Brazil has been poised to take on more leadership in recent years. Cardoso's *Real Plan* finally curbed inflation; Lula's *bolsa familia* and other social programs reduced poverty. Recent administrations have both continued Brazil's use of multilateralism as well as pursued military modernization as a means to further Brazil's foreign policy aspirations; yet, despite having a military that seeks power projections abroad, Brazil has routinely used its military domestically to quell violent *favelas* and suppress narcotrafficking in the Amazon. In some respects, Brazil has codified the roles and missions of its military; however, Brazil frequently reverts to its inward orientation and uses its military as a "handyman" to respond to pressing needs—often at the expense of long-term, strategic goals. While Brazil has made advances in the last twenty years, consistency has been the missing component to positive civil–military relations.

The following sections apply the civil–military relations framework to Brazil and assess the democratic incorporation of its military, the democratic oversight of its military, and the military effectiveness under Brazilian democracy.

⁵⁹ Latinobarómetro Public Opinion Database, (Banco de Datos, 2013), <http://www.latinobarometro.org/latContents.jsp>

⁶⁰ 67% of Brazilians have "some" or "a lot" of trust in the armed forces; 49.3% of Brazilians are in strong disagreement with the statement that "the armed forces should govern"; Latinobarómetro, 2013.

⁶¹ For instance, Montero claims that Brazil "lacks the will to throw its weight around," in Alfred P. Montero, *Brazil: Reversal of Fortune* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2014), 152; Trinkunas describes Brazil as "erratic" in the methods used to achieve its foreign policy goals, in Harold Trinkunas, *Brazil's Rise: Seeking Influence on Global Governance*, The Brookings Institution, April, 2014, 3.

1. Democratic Incorporation of the Military

The Brazilian military was a largely autonomous entity within Brazil even after return to democracy in 1985. Generals served at the cabinet level and retained high levels of influence in non-military matters such as intelligence and state enterprises. Significant reforms to incorporate the Brazilian military into the democratic government began under President Cardoso in 1996 with the National Defense Policy, a first in the history of Brazil. This important first step was followed in 2008 with a National Defense Strategy (*Estrategia Nacional de Defesa*, or END) and in 2012 with the White Book on National Defense (*Livro Branco de Defesa Nacional*). Each of these was a first for Brazil and was significant not only for the guidance and transparency they provided to defense but also in that “civilians played a prominent role in drafting key defense policy documents.”⁶² According to the Commander of the Brazilian Army, General Villas Bôas, “for the first time, the political powers told the military what their concept was of the armed forces, and what they understood as necessary for Brazil.”⁶³ The publication of these documents is of dual significance: the military ceded autonomy to the civilian government and civilians began to focus increased attention to the management of defense institutions.

While the publication of defense policy documents are important to codifying roles and responsibilities of the military as well as providing transparency to the previously “off-limits” parts of the government, the ministers of defense in Brazil from 1999 to 2007 “were not politically powerful figures within the government” who did not “have the authority to make their preferences fully prevail over those of the military.”⁶⁴ This changed in 2007 with the appointment of Nelson Jobim as Minister of Defense, a “heavyweight politico” providing unprecedented leverage to defense matters at the

⁶² Octavio Amorim Neto, “Democracy, Civil–Military Relations, and Defense Policy in Brazil,” paper presented for the 2012 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, New Orleans, July 17, 2012, 1.

⁶³ Ana Dubeux, et al., “‘Não Cabem Atalhos na Constituição,’ diz comandante do Exército Villas Boas” *Correio Braziliense*, Sept 27, 2015, http://www.correiobraziliense.com.br/app/noticia/politica/2015/09/27/internas_polbraeco,500267/nao-cabem-atalhos-na-constituicao-diz-comandante-do-exercito-villas.shtml, translation by author.

⁶⁴ Amorim Neto, “Democracy,” 18.

cabinet level.⁶⁵ As Minister of Defense, Jobim not only passed the END but also engaged in public dialogue to align defense priorities with broader national priorities. The formulation of the END was the product of consultation with “representatives of various public and private agencies, as well as knowledgeable citizens in the area of Defense, in addition to the Commanders of the three branches of the Armed Forces.”⁶⁶ Roles assigned to the military branches supported national priorities to include defense of the Amazon, creation of a blue-water navy to project power abroad, and the link between Brazil’s defense strategy with its development strategy. This final assertion is made unequivocally in the END: “The national strategy of defense is inseparable from the national strategy of development. The latter drives the former. The former provides shielding to the latter.”⁶⁷ Since its first publication in 2008, the END has been revised in its second edition in 2012 under President Rousseff.

While Brazil has grand strategic goals for its military—most notably in developing nuclear-powered submarines in defense of the “Blue Amazon” and modernizing its fleet of fighter jets—the Brazilian military is also engaged in the less revered role of supporting police missions. The Brazilian military is not constitutionally restricted from engaging in domestic security and has been activated to support state and municipal police forces both during mass events (e.g., the 2013 World Youth Day and the 2014 World Cup) and for prolonged operations to pacify violent *favelas* in Rio de Janeiro. Such uses are an improvement on the past, when the military initiated domestic security operations; however, despite being directed by civilian authorities, “the push-pull that leads to the military’s involvement in state and local policing emphasizes the need for institutional strengthening.”⁶⁸ Positive civil–military relations are hampered when the military are routinely used as relief for traditional institutions of law enforcement.

⁶⁵ Amorim Neto, “Democracy,” 19.

⁶⁶ Nelson A. Jobim and Roberto Mangabeira Unger, *National Strategy of Defense* (Brazilian Ministry of Defense, December 17, 2008).

⁶⁷ *National Strategy of Defense*, 8.

⁶⁸ Thomas Bruneau and Scott Tollefson, “Civil–Military Relations in Brazil: A Reassessment,” *Journal of Politics in Latin America* 2 (2014), 118.

Bruneau and Tollefson make the compelling case that Brazilian democracy has consolidated in the last twenty years, and that “civil–military relations have evolved in the context of this broad democratic deepening.”⁶⁹ With long-standing ambitions in domestic development and in the elevation of its stature on the world stage, Brazil has looked at its military as one of many tools to achieve these ambitions. While the military is incorporated into Brazilian democracy, there is still a struggle between the long-term military aspirations with the short-term assistance to law enforcement required domestically.

2. Democratic Oversight of the Military

Brazil established the Ministry of Defense in 1999 and has had nine Ministers since—all civilians. The civilian minister replaced the military from its cabinet position in the government and is the chief representative of the military on both the National Defense Council and the Military Council of Defense, two separate advising councils to the President of Brazil.⁷⁰ While the Ministry of Defense has been praised as a key milestone in Brazilian civil–military relations, especially as a means to exercise civilian control, the institutional capacity is limited by its lack of a broad civilian cadre. Bruneau and Tollefson point out that “there is no career track [*concurso*] within the MOD...which results in civilians having minimal roles.”⁷¹ Part of this deficit may be attributed to a lack of civilians knowledgeable in defense and capable of filling these roles. If so, recent trends may aid in this shortcoming.

Since 2011, a government-funded contract solicitation (*edital*) has resulted in two programs to boost science and technology research in universities focused on national defense (*Pró-Defesa*) and national strategic issues (*Pró-Estratégia*). Furthermore, “an epistemic community is emerging in Brazil that is focused on issues of security and defense,” to include the 2005 founding of the Brazilian Association of Defense Studies (*Associação Brasileira de Estudos de Defesa*) with annual conferences and an academic

⁶⁹ Bruneau and Tollefson, “Civil–Military Relations in Brazil,” 113.

⁷⁰ Latin American Security and Defence Network, (Comparative Atlas of Defence in Latin America, 2014 Edition), <http://www.resdal.org/ing/defensa.html>

⁷¹ Bruneau and Tollefson, “Civil–Military Relations in Brazil,” 127.

journal.⁷² In 2009, the Ministry of Defense began talks of establishing a research institute to conduct strategic studies of regional and international defense. The *Instituto Pandiá Calógeras*, named after Brazil's first civilian Minister of War in 1919, has since employed a civilian cadre to act as a think tank for the Ministry of Defense.⁷³ While this is a step in the right direction to building a properly staffed Ministry of Defense, the issue remains that civilians only work *on* defense as opposed to working *with* and *in* defense as members of the Ministry of Defense staff.

The emergence of broader civilian defense knowledge will also aid in legislative oversight of the military. Both the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies and Senate have congressional oversight of the military granted by the 1988 Constitution, and have committees dedicated to this role. Until recently, however, the legislative branch has “abdicated their lawmaking authority in favor of the executive branch.”⁷⁴ Congress typically relied on “fire alarms” to be sounded by interest groups rather than employ institutional oversight mechanisms such as public hearings and official inquiries.⁷⁵ Octavio Amorim Neto points out that the current trend is constructive and that the “Brazilian legislature has recently begun to take back the authority over national defense.” This is a positive sign that Brazilian politicians are expending increased political capital in defense matters—a relative anomaly in Latin America.

Broad governmental oversight in Brazil is conducted by the Federal Public Ministry (*Ministério Público*) and is not prevented from targeting the military in its role of defending public interest and ensuring governmental accountability. Bruneau and Tollefson point out that “the Public Ministry is extremely powerful and autonomous in defending public interest. All who are in public life in Brazil are aware of its immense powers, and it can act as a deterrent to public abuse, including in the area of national

⁷² Bruneau and Tollefson, “Civil–Military Relations in Brazil,” 111.

⁷³ Brazilian Ministry of Defense, “Instituto Pandiá Calógeras,” accessed November 6, 2015, <http://www.defesa.gov.br/ensino-e-pesquisa/estudos-estrategicos/instituto-pandia-calogeras-ipc>.

⁷⁴ Amorim Neto, “Democracy,” 13.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

security and defense.”⁷⁶ Recent scholarship in Brazil concurs with Bruneau and Tollefson’s assessment on the role of the *Ministério Público* and begins the task of showing empirically that it has effectively carried out civilian oversight of the military in the last decade.⁷⁷

An additional oversight mechanism was employed by President Dilma Rousseff in the launching of a Truth Commission to investigate human rights abuses during the military dictatorship. Human rights violations are an unresolved issue in Brazil, largely due to the 1979 Amnesty Law granting protections to members of the armed forces and the government from 1961 to 1979. In 2009, in an attempt to develop a national inquiry into past abuses, President Lula faced strong opposition from the military when he attempted to form a truth commission. In two setbacks, President Lula backed away from establishing a truth commission after military opposition and, in 2010, a Brazilian court upheld the 1979 Amnesty Law.

President Rousseff was successful in delivering a Truth Commission in 2011 and received congressional endorsement; however, the commission was limited to investigative duties and received no authority to prosecute. The final report of the 7-member Truth Commission, was released in late 2014 and gives “a damning portrayal of the military’s actions, including killings, torture, sexual violence and forced disappearances.”⁷⁸ The report also recommends prosecution for abuses—something not pursued by Rousseff. Speaking at an event to release the Truth Commission’s final report, President Rousseff proclaimed that “we, who believe in the truth, hope that this report contributes to make it so that ghosts from a sad and painful past are no longer able to find shelter in silence.”⁷⁹ While the Amnesty Law still stands, the Truth Commission

⁷⁶ Bruneau and Tollefson, “Civil–Military Relations in Brazil,” 128.

⁷⁷ Florian Augusto de Abreu Coutinho Madruga, “O Congresso Nacional, as relações civis-militares e o política de defesa no Brasil (1999-2014),” (master’s thesis, Fundação Getulio Vargas, School of Brazilian Public Administration and Business, 2015).

⁷⁸ Adam Taylor, “Brazil’s Torture Report Brings a President to Tears,” *Washington Post*, December 10, 2014, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2014/12/10/brazils-torture-report-brings-a-president-to-tears/>.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

provided some level of healing to Brazil. The military, however, still has not been held accountable for past abuses.

The institutions of Brazilian democracy have increased their oversight of the armed forces, largely pushed by a recent increase in interest from civil society. While Rousseff's Truth Commission was a positive step to account for past abuses, the Amnesty Law still provides protections for past human rights crimes committed by the Brazilian military.

3. Military Effectiveness under Democracy

The Brazilian military is not only the most capable Latin American military, it also has the widest range of military roles. As defined by the 1988 Constitution and in subsequent national laws in 1999 and 2010, the Brazilian armed forces are responsible for defending national sovereignty, protecting law and order, participating in peacekeeping operations, supporting national development, combatting transnational and environmental crimes, aiding in emergency response, and securing national borders.⁸⁰ With such widespread responsibilities there is a concern that the Brazilian military remains the government's "handyman" called on to address any number of problems. Not surprisingly, law enforcement in Brazil has been criticized as having become "militarized," causing an increase in the violence that the military had been called in to subdue.⁸¹ Similarly, there is concern that the military has experienced a "police-ization" whereby what was intended to be short-term support for law enforcement has seen successive administrations continue the use of the military to take on police missions.⁸² There was speculation that this mission may desist after the election of Dilma Rousseff; however, only a month after her election, Rousseff called on soldiers to continue in their mission supporting the Pacifying Police Units in Rio de Janeiro's *favelas*.

⁸⁰ Latin American Security and Defence Network.

⁸¹ Jorge Zaverucha, "Fragile Democracy and the Militarization of Public Safety in Brazil," *Latin American Perspectives* 27 (May, 2000); Renato Sérgio de Lima, et al., "A Gestão da Vida e da Segurança Pública no Brasil," *Revista Sociedade e Estado* 30 (Jan-Apr 2015).

⁸² Juliana Bertazzo, "Brazilian Security and Defence Policy under President Dilma Rousseff: Transition and Initial Challenges," *Critical Sociology* 13, No.1 (2012), 6.

President Rousseff did place increased emphasis on a different role of the military, however, as she called on the military to increase assistance to national development:

The fundamental priority of my government is, as you all know, to eliminate poverty in Brazil. For this I count on the armed forces. Their wide experience in social work, carried out all across the homeland, reaching out to the furthestmost and most remote regions is invaluable for us to achieve this essential goal.⁸³

The military's support of national development is not a new phenomenon—in fact, defense and development are decried as “inseparable” in the END—but from the perspective of positive civil–military relations there is concern that the military's use for such missions can supplant state capacity from developing in other institutions. Brazil's use of its military as a “handyman” can lead to this same concern in its police force, border patrol, and from establishing basic government presence in the Amazon region. In all of these deficiencies to state capacity, the military has been called in to assist.

The Brazilian military has been a leader in UN Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKO)—both in the number of personnel deployed and in assuming the lead role in multinational operations. Brazil routinely has over 1,500 troops deployed to as many as nine different UNPKOs.⁸⁴ In 2004, Brazil took command of the mission in Haiti and in 2011 took lead of the maritime task force for the UNPKO in Lebanon. As a strong proponent of international organizations and multilateralism, Brazil's commitment to UN Peacekeeping underscores its longstanding bid for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council.

In terms of defense spending, Brazil is the outright leader in Latin America. Despite recent economic hardships, Jane's reports that “national security investment appears to remain high priority for President Dilma Rousseff, who is likely to commit significant sums to national border and maritime boundary security.”⁸⁵ Across-the-board

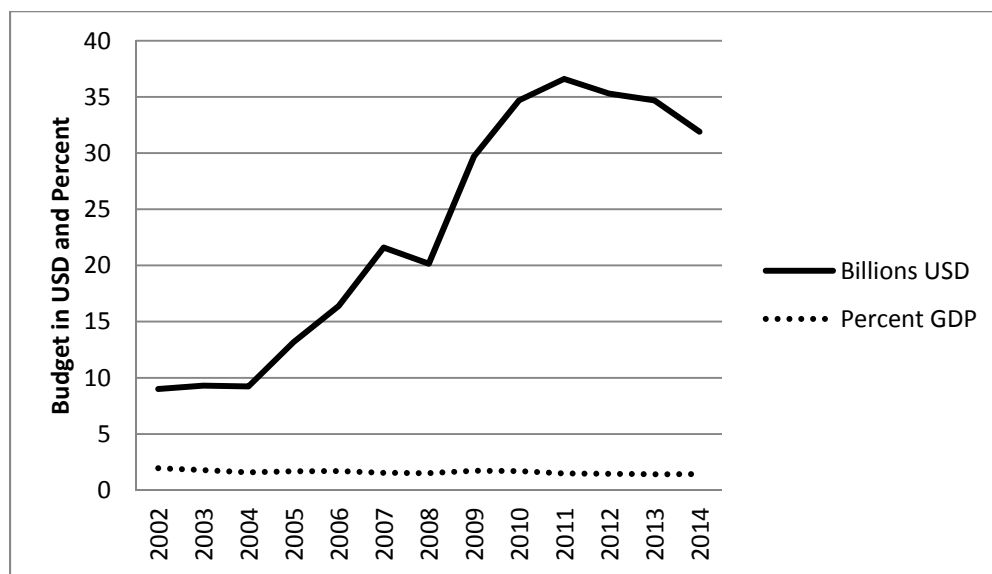
⁸³ Bertazzo, “Brazilian Security,” 11.

⁸⁴ Latin American Security and Defence Network.

⁸⁵ Jane's Information Group (Sentinel Security Assessment, accessed June 10, 2015), <https://janes.ihs.com.libproxy.nps.edu/SouthAmerica/Display/1304557>

budget cuts have hurt some military programs, although Brazil still has ambitious, long-term procurement programs to attain nuclear-powered submarines (PROSUB) and SAAB Gripen fighter jets.⁸⁶ Since 2002, overall defense spending has increased as the Brazilian economy experienced high growth (see Figure 2). The defense budget as a percent of GDP has remained very constant, at an average of 1.61% of GDP—above the Latin American average of 1.28% of GDP.⁸⁷ The Brazilian military is well-funded and cuts in spending have resulted from recent economic woes, not as a means to restrict or punish.

Figure 2. Brazil's Defense Budget



Adapted from the International Institute for Strategic Studies (The Military Balance)

The Brazilian military is a well-funded force, especially by regional standards. Much like national ambitions for an elevated stature in the world, the Brazilian military seeks world-class technologies and the ability to project power abroad. Both military and broader national ambitions are restrained, however, by the need to tend to matters at home. The military is routinely employed as a “handyman” to assist underdeveloped or overwhelmed state and municipal agencies, most notably in the violent *favelas*. In order

⁸⁶ Jane’s Information Group (Sentinel Security Assessment).

⁸⁷ The International Institute for Strategic Studies (The Military Balance, accessed October 3, 2015), <http://www.tandfonline.com/libproxy.nps.edu/loi/tmib20#.VqKEIv53Hcs>.

for the military to elevate to world-class effectiveness, it should be relieved of domestic missions and engage more proactively with other modern and professional militaries.

D. THE ROUSSEFF LEGACY

Dilma Rousseff, the once-Marxist insurgent who was captured and tortured by the military, was elected president of Brazil in 2010. As the hand-picked successor of the popular Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, many waited to see how President Rousseff would engage the military. Much of the institutionalization of positive civil–military relations had been accomplished by her two predecessors, most notably the creation of a civilian-led Ministry of Defense and a set of new national policy documents. President Rousseff did, however, take two of her own actions that would put the military in the spotlight and serve as reminder to a new age of civil–military relations.

The first was the successful launching of a Truth Commission to formally present facts of human rights abuse under the military regime. The second action was a warning sign to the military, with a focus on shifting Brazil’s military culture: Rousseff “imposed a ban on commemorations of the civilian-military coup d’état, referred to by the military as a revolution.”⁸⁸ As if to ensure that the culture of democracy was fully ingrained in the military, President Rousseff remarked that “a country, such as Brazil, that relies on armed forces characterized by a close attachment to their constitutional duties, is a country that has corrected its own ways and reached a high level of institutional maturity.”⁸⁹ While neither action may be seen as transformative to the institutions of positive civil–military relations, the symbolic effect is powerful and has provided a cultural shift to relations between Brazil’s armed forces and civilian government.

In an interview with a Brazilian newspaper in September 2015, Commander of the Army, General Villas Bôas expresses a concern that procurement programs to modernize the armed forces are at risk due to a decline in the military budget. Villas Bôas does not cite political motives to the “interruption” to the military modernization that

⁸⁸ Bertazzo, “Brazilian Security,” 10.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

these cuts have created, rather broad economic hardships in Brazil.⁹⁰ His comments portray a Brazilian military that exists on “two poles”: one is the traditional role of waging war while the other is rendering public services.⁹¹ Ultimately, the General concludes that the Brazilian military must be ready to “attend to the demands of the population.”⁹² When asked about the Brazilian’s Army’s concern with the on-going economic and political crises in Brazil, General Villas Bôas seems to understand the military’s place in Brazil’s new civil–military relations: “today Brazil has institutions that are very well structured, solid, and functioning perfectly, completing their tasks, that safeguard society. There are no shortcuts to the Constitution.”⁹³

Both from the creation of strong defense institutions and through a shift in the culture of Brazilian civil–military relations, many strides forward have been made over the last decade. Considering the economic and political turmoil facing Brazil in 2016, the region’s and the world’s eyes will closely monitor Brazil and hope for stability in Latin America’s largest country.

⁹⁰ Correio Braziliense, “Não Cabem.”

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Correio Braziliense, “Não Cabem,” translation by author.

⁹³ Ibid.

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III. EL SALVADOR

El Salvador has some of the most pressing security challenges in Latin America. Gang networks and a spillover of drug trafficking violence have made El Salvador one of the most dangerous countries in the region and the world. Furthermore, a twelve-year civil war tore the country apart, only coming to a UN-brokered peace accord in 1992. The end of the war saw significant changes to civil–military relations; however, recent uses of the military to enforce harsh anti-gang measures make civil–military relations inundated with immense challenges. In 2009, the former insurgent movement turned political party won the presidency for the first time. Following the presidency of former journalist Mauricio Funes, the FMLN retained the office when Salvador Sánchez Cerén, an ex-guerrilla commander, took over in 2014. The democratic transition in 2009 between former civil war enemies was peaceful and a milestone for the deepening of Salvadoran democracy; however, widespread violence, corruption and inequality plague the nation creating significant challenges to positive civil–military relations. The first section gives a brief military history of El Salvador from 1979 to the present. The second section offers a succinct biography of ex-insurgent leader Salvador Sánchez Cerén, known during the civil war as “Comandante Leonel González.” The third section analyzes contemporary civil–military relations in El Salvador. The chapter concludes with a portrayal of President Sánchez Cerén’s legacy as one that is still incomplete but thus far has a mixed record toward achieving positive civil–military relations.

A. SALVADORAN MILITARY HISTORY: 1979–PRESENT

The military in El Salvador has a bloody history of allegiance to the small minority of conservative elite landholders. Often changing hands between military officers and powerful oligarchs, the presidency was rarely achieved by legitimate popular consent of the people of El Salvador in the 19th and early 20th Centuries. Democratic reform was a very dangerous endeavor, as exemplified by the notorious 1932 massacre of over 30,000 peasant activists (known as “*la Matanza*”) under the government of General Maximiliano Hernández Martínez. The organizer of the activists, Augustín Farabundo

Martí, did not survive *la Matanza*; however, later government opposition would rally under his name.

Even after *la Matanza*, the military of El Salvador was used to stabilize the country and suppress government resistance. In the 1970s, a number of factors led to a decrease in military control of the population, to include a growing communist movement inspired by the Cuban and Nicaraguan revolutions, and an active Catholic Church calling for social justice and an end to violence—led by Archbishop Oscar Romero.⁹⁴ In response to growing unrest in the mid-1970s, the newly formed paramilitary group *Organización Democrática Nacionalista* (ORDEN) sought out members of several guerrilla organizations, killing hundreds.⁹⁵

In 1979, an attempt was made by a group of officers to scale back repression and a bloodless *coup d'état* put a new civilian-military *junta* in power. As described by a Salvadoran officer, “a new generation of officers, believing that [the military was] established to serve the entire civilian population and not just a small part of it...projected a new line of military thinking that invoked human rights, political pluralism, and electoral reform.”⁹⁶ The efforts were unsuccessful at providing a peaceful political transition, however, as “the restructuring of the *junta* and rising official violence quickly alienated much of the center and left.”⁹⁷ The previously disjointed opposition formed a single, unified insurgent movement called the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN).

Violence spiked in 1980, reaching over 11,000 killed by official government estimates.⁹⁸ Victims were not limited to the declared belligerents of the conservative

⁹⁴ A movement in the Catholic Church of Latin America, called Liberation Theology, strove for increased social justice and a “preferential option for the poor”; social justice was formally discussed by Church leaders at the Conference of Latin American Bishops in Medellín, Colombia, in 1968.

⁹⁵ John A. Booth, et al., *Understanding Central America: Global Forces, Rebellion, and Change*, 6th Ed., (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2015), 143–44.

⁹⁶ Salvador A. Barraza-Giralt, “On the Road to Democracy: Civil–Military Relations in El Salvador,” (master’s thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 1998), 20–21.

⁹⁷ Booth, et al., *Understanding Central America*, 145.

⁹⁸ Booth, et al. cite El Salvador’s government estimate for 1980 as “11,471 violent deaths” of a total population of about 4.5 million at the time.

military government and heavily armed Marxist guerrillas; hundreds of bystanders and over a dozen religious clergy were killed to include the assassination of Archbishop Romero while celebrating mass. The civil war in El Salvador, in the greater context of the Cold War, was viewed by the United States much the same as in fellow Central American nations Guatemala and Nicaragua. In an effort to contain the spread of communism, the United States supplied significant aid to the military while the FMLN received periodic support from the Sandinista government in Nicaragua.⁹⁹ Civil war endured for a total of twelve years in El Salvador, resulting in over 70,000 killed and over a sixth of the population leaving the country to escape the violence.¹⁰⁰

In 1992, war came to an end with a UN-brokered peace treaty. The treaty cut by half the size of the armed forces, demilitarized the FMLN, and created it as a legal political party. A UN truth commission was also launched that, upon publication of its report in 1993, declared that 85% of all deaths were attributed to the military, ORDEN, and “death squad” operations.¹⁰¹ Immediately following the release of the truth commission report, the Salvadoran legislature passed an amnesty law that provided legal protection to crimes committed during the war.

Democratic elections have taken place since the 1992 peace, with the presidency and the majority of seats in the legislature won by the conservative party, ARENA. In 2000, the FMLN gained in popularity and became the largest party in El Salvador’s unicameral legislature. Under ARENA presidencies, and largely due to widespread unemployment and post-war arms proliferation, Salvadorans experienced increases in gang violence and an economy that relied heavily on remittances from emigrants to the United States; to gain popularity with a tough-on-crime image, ARENA introduced a *mano dura* program and campaigned on turning around a deteriorating security environment.¹⁰² *Mano dura*, or “iron fist,” gave wide authority to “joint police-military

⁹⁹ Booth, et al., *Understanding Central America*, 147; Barraza-Giralt, “On the Road,” 25.

¹⁰⁰ Booth, et al., *Understanding Central America*, 150.

¹⁰¹ United Nations Security Council, *From Madness to Hope: the 12-year war in El Salvador: Report of the Commission on the Truth for El Salvador* (New York: United Nations, April 1, 1993), 43.

¹⁰² Booth, et al., *Understanding Central America*, 154–55.

anti-gang squads” to detain suspected gang members with little or no criminal evidence; critics have pointed out that the policy’s primary goal was “not to curb street gang activity but to improve the ARENA party’s electoral advantage in the eight-month run-up to the 2004 presidential elections.”¹⁰³ Public security, in fact, has not improved since the implementation of *mano dura* policies and the country has been at or near the top of regional and global homicide rates over the last decade.¹⁰⁴

In 2009, Mauricio Funes became the first FMLN president of El Salvador. After his election, President Funes continued and even increased many of the anti-gang programs of his predecessor, dispatching the military into high-crime neighborhoods. Despite the demilitarization of the police force in the 1992 peace treaty, Funes used the military to aid in law enforcement missions and even appointed a former military general as the minister of justice and public security.¹⁰⁵ President Funes’s vice-president, an ex-guerrilla commander during the civil war, was nominated by the FMLN in the 2014 runoff elections and won with just over 50% of the popular vote.

B. INSURGENT LEADER “COMANDANTE GONZÁLEZ”

Salvador Sánchez Cerén was born and raised in rural El Salvador and studied to become a teacher in the capital city, San Salvador. In 1972, in his late 20s, Sánchez Cerén joined the left wing *Fuerzas Populares de Liberación*, one of the five core movements that would later join to form the FMLN. Other core movements included the clandestine and armed Salvadoran communist party and the national armed resistance. According to his presidential biography, Sánchez Cerén always insisted that the only way to end the civil war was through a political solution.¹⁰⁶ Sánchez Cerén was an active member of the armed guerrilla forces and became a high-ranking commander. He took the *nom-de-*

¹⁰³ Sonja Wolf, “Street Gangs of El Salvador,” in *Maras: Gang Violence and Security in Central America* eds. Bruneau et al. (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2011), 58–59.

¹⁰⁴ With the exception of a one-year reduction in 2012 due to a temporary gang truce, El Salvador’s homicide rate has been in the top five globally and top two regionally (with Honduras) for homicide rate, according to the UN Office of Drugs and Crime.

¹⁰⁵ This “re-militarization” of the police was highly criticized in El Salvador; Booth, et al., *Understanding Central America*, 159.

¹⁰⁶ Presidency of the Republic of El Salvador, “Presidente de la República,” accessed on November 6, 2015, <http://www.presidencia.gob.sv/>.

guerre of Comandante Leonel González and led insurgent military operations for several years.

As the 12-year civil war neared its end, Sánchez Cerén was a lead FMLN negotiator working with the ARENA government, the United Nations, and other mediators to draft and eventually sign the 1992 Chapultepec Peace Accords. Sánchez Cerén was first elected to public office as a deputy (representative) to the national legislature in 2000 and was re-elected in 2003 and 2006. Given his background as a teacher, as a deputy Sánchez Cerén strove to reform El Salvador's education system and expand youth opportunities.¹⁰⁷

The FMLN nominated Mauricio Funes as presidential candidate in the 2009 election, in part to soften the image of the former insurgent political party. Funes was a journalist during the civil war with sympathies for the FMLN cause. It was with some surprise, then, that Salvador Sánchez Cerén was selected as his running-mate. While serving as vice president, Sánchez Cerén also took on the “voluntary” duties as Minister of Education for a three-year period where he pushed for greater education for the poor and extended food services in public schools, according to his biography.¹⁰⁸ Despite large leads in early polling, Salvador Sánchez Cerén was elected president of El Salvador in 2014 by a very narrow margin. He was depicted by his ARENA adversaries as a militant and socialist and likened to Hugo Chavez; a more favorable comparison has also been made to the ex-insurgent president of Uruguay, Jose Mujica.¹⁰⁹ With comparisons aside, Sánchez Cerén has taken his own approach to the monumental challenges facing present-day El Salvador.

C. CONTEMPORARY CIVIL–MILITARY RELATIONS IN EL SALVADOR

A number of demilitarizing programs were included in the 1992 Chapultepec Peace Accords that ended the civil war. In addition to the demobilization of guerrilla

¹⁰⁷ Presidency of the Republic of El Salvador, “Presidente de la República.”

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Juan Carlos Pérez Salazar, “Sánchez Cerén: de guerrillero a presidente de El Salvador,” BBC Mundo, March 17, 2014, http://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias/2014/03/140317_el_salvador_sanchez_ceren_presidente_sembianza_jcps

fighters and the establishment of the FMLN as a legitimate political party, the most significant reforms to civil–military relations included the dissolution of the National Police Force, National Guard, and Treasury Police as well as the creation of a separate Ministry of Public Security (previously under the Ministry of Defense) with an entirely civilian police force. The new structure removed the three aforementioned police agencies from military control and re-populated the new National Civil Police (*Policia Nacional Civil*, PNC) with former members of the government police and insurgent forces.¹¹⁰ Additionally, new institutions with a blend of civilian and military cadre were established to reform police and military education as well as to train the PNC and military cadets.¹¹¹

In addition to the challenges presented by past and current violence in El Salvador, historically weak institutions and a limited state capacity make for a difficult environment to attain positive civil–military relations. When polled, Salvadorans have a weak support for democracy as the preferred method of government—just under half of the population in favor—and have very low confidence in their judicial system and police forces.¹¹² Surprisingly, however, Salvadorans have very high trust in their armed forces; at 70.4%, El Salvador has the region’s second-highest confidence in its military.¹¹³ This high level of public trust is one reason for successive governments to employ the military in support of law enforcement missions domestically.

Civil–military relations in El Salvador suffer many of the setbacks of other aspects of its democratic government. The government generates low tax revenues from its population due to low tax rates and a weak capacity to collect from its citizens and private companies; corruption is rampant across Central America, especially in the

¹¹⁰ Barraza-Giralt, “On the Road,” 35.

¹¹¹ All military cadets must attend a centralized military academy for two years, then complete two years at their service-specific school, Barraza-Giralt, “On the Road,” 36.

¹¹² According to Latinobarómetro, 48.7% of the population agrees that democracy is preferable to any other form of government; only 23.8% of Salvadorans have “some or a lot” of confidence in their judicial system, and 38.8% of the population has “some or a lot” of confidence in their police; compared to regional averages of 29.5% and 40.7%, respectively.

¹¹³ The Latin American average is 49.6%, Ecuador has the highest trust in its military; Latinobarómetro, 2013.

“Northern Triangle” nations of El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala; and deep inequality and poverty leave large parts of the population vulnerable to poor living conditions.¹¹⁴ It is no surprise, then, that many of the institutions of positive civil–military relations are either weak or altogether absent. Some progress has been made, however, since the 1992 Peace Accords, as will be discussed in the remainder of this chapter.

The following sections apply the civil–military relations framework to El Salvador and assess the democratic incorporation of its military, the democratic oversight of its military, and the military effectiveness under Salvadoran democracy.

1. Democratic Incorporation of the Military

The roles of the armed forces of El Salvador were addressed and laid out in the peace accords and amended into the constitution, with a focus on the traditional role of territorial defense against external threats. There is a stipulation that the military may be used in response to emergencies—a clause that has been invoked to allow for the military to be employed in support of law enforcement missions. This interpretation of the legal authority to dispatch the military domestically was highly criticized for being in conflict with the text and tone of the peace accords; however, in 2014 the Salvadoran Supreme Court upheld previous executive decrees authorizing the military to continue their law enforcement missions.¹¹⁵ Rather than outline a plan to retract the military from their “emergency” use at home, the recent trend has been the opposite—most recently exemplified by the Sánchez Cerén administration’s dispatching of three 200-man “rapid reaction” army battalions to high-crime areas.¹¹⁶ In order to achieve positive civil–military relations, the concern continues that the *de facto* roles of the military are not in line with their *de jure* constitutional mandate—an incongruity that should be formally addressed by Salvadoran lawmakers considering the foreseeable continuation of domestic military use.

¹¹⁴ These factors are portrayed in detail in Clare Ribando Seelke, *El Salvador: Background and U.S. Relations* (CRS Report No. R43616) (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, May 19, 2015).

¹¹⁵ Seelke, *El Salvador*, 11.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

A second deficiency to the incorporation of the Salvadoran military is the high amount of autonomy still allotted to the armed forces. On the one hand, the military is a success story of post-conflict settlement between former enemies. High-ranking officers were moved out (retired or transitioned to other government jobs) and the remaining force was made up of former government soldiers and a contingent of FMLN fighters. On the other hand, the military continues to be resistant to democratic incorporation with its civilian government. As a strong example of the military's persistent isolation from broader Salvadoran democracy, one civil-military relations scholar notes that "the president does not have a free hand in appointing defense ministers; he is constrained by the high command, which would not accept a civilian defense minister."¹¹⁷

In his first year in office, President Sánchez Cerén has taken a positive first step in forming a national security plan. A forum including government, business, church, media, academia, and civil society leaders formed a National Council for Citizen Security (*Consejo Nacional de Seguridad Ciudadana y Convivencia*, or CNSCC). The CNSCC resulted in a new security plan, called *El Salvador Seguro*, to combine existing policing efforts with holistic approaches such as violence prevention, job creation, youth outreach, criminal rehabilitation, and services for crime victims.¹¹⁸ The costly plan is a success in its incorporation of broad segments of society, but the full funding source is not yet determined and there is no inclusion of an end-date for domestic military deployments.¹¹⁹ In sum, there is still considerable work to be accomplished in democratically incorporating the military into Salvadoran democracy—a task shared by civilian politicians and military leaders.

2. Democratic Oversight of the Military

The Minister of National Defense is a military officer and the senior defense official under the president, who is commander-in-chief. As previously mentioned, the Minister has significant autonomy in his management of the military, a structure that has

¹¹⁷ Zoltan Barany, "Building National Armies after Civil War: Lessons Learned from Bosnia, El Salvador, and Lebanon," *Political Science Quarterly* 129, no. 2 (2014), 228.

¹¹⁸ Seelke, *El Salvador*, 10–11.

¹¹⁹ *El Salvador Seguro* has an estimated 5-year cost of \$2 Billion; Seelke, *El Salvador*, 10–11.

a long historical precedent. One Salvadoran military officer describes the relationship between the military and civilian oversight, even after the peace accords:

The job of supervising the military was viewed as a very dangerous task and one that created very powerful adversaries and did not boost one's political career. Therefore, few civilians in civil service wanted to be involved in defense-related issues. Instead, they handed that responsibility to military personnel.¹²⁰

In addition to the Minister of National Defense, the president is also directly advised by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on his 8-member National Security Council.¹²¹ With a military officer serving at the ministerial level and two serving on the security advisory council, the executive branch has not adopted the prescribed democratic oversight mechanism present in most other modern Latin American militaries: a civilian minister of defense.

The Salvadoran constitution requires the Minister of National Defense to submit a budget proposal to the legislature; however, there is a deficiency in defense knowledge among the civilian population. This lack of knowledge has been evident in a traditionally inactive legislature. The legislative branch does have the structure to conduct military oversight, an 11-member National Defense Committee, but the legislators "lack the information to ask anything but the most perfunctory questions."¹²² That is, the legislature has not performed its duties in actively overseeing matters of security and defense, despite having a suitable structure in place. Zoltan Barany suggests that an "implicit deal" still exists in current civil-military relations whereby "the soldiers stay out of politics but the state takes very good care of them."¹²³ As a result, little scrutiny has been conducted by civilian politicians in the funding or management of the military.

On a regional level, Central American nations have been working to address a lack of knowledge on and coordination of security initiatives through conferences and U.S.-led programs. The annual Central American Regional Security Conference draws

¹²⁰ Barraza-Giralt, "On the Road," 45.

¹²¹ Latin American Security and Defence Network.

¹²² Barany, "National Armies after Civil War," 227.

¹²³ Barany, "National Armies after Civil War," 228.

political leaders from across the region to discuss issues with military and police officials (including many U.S. officials, such as the Commander of U.S. Southern Command) and civilian subject matter experts from all of Central America, as well as other Latin American observers.¹²⁴ U.S. programs, such as the FBI's National Gang Task Force and the State Department's Central American Regional Security Initiative (CARSI), expand training and coordination between the various counter-gang agencies across the region as well as strengthening state institutions. These initiatives expand the base of knowledge on security issues and are a positive step to building a more robust democratic oversight of the military.

A second positive step was achieved in October 2015 with the Salvadoran legislature passing an unprecedented Security Tax to expand funding for *El Salvador Seguro*. Overcoming a heated public debate, legislators were able to pass a 5% tax on wealthy individuals and businesses, as well as cell phone and Internet plans.¹²⁵ The willingness and ability to engage in this new act is a very positive step to civilian politicians seriously engaging in their role of confronting the security situation and generating a new source of funding to aid El Salvador's police and military.

A further impediment of oversight exists, however, with the continuation of the Amnesty Law of 1993, granting impunity for human rights abuses during the civil war. Unlike with other military human rights abuses across Latin America—and in stark contrast to the other two case studies presented in this thesis—many of the victims of the civil war in El Salvador were poor, rural *campesinos*, lacking the “clout or media access to protest” and push the government for justice.¹²⁶ Atrocities in El Salvador were also at a higher magnitude and more brazen than in other Latin American cases. With over 70,000 killed and thousands more tortured, raped, injured, and displaced, El Salvador still has deep wounds. Mauricio Funes was the first Salvadoran president to formally

¹²⁴ Jose Ruiz, “Honduran President Opens 2015 Conference on Central American Security,” U.S. Southern Command, March 26, 2015, <http://www.southcom.mil/newsroom/Pages/Honduran-President-opens-2015-conference-on-Central-American-security.aspx>.

¹²⁵ Nelson Renteria and Gabrielle Stargardt, “El Salvador Congress Approves Tax Package to Fight Violent Crime,” *Reuters*, October 30, 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-el-salvador-crime-idUSKCN0SO0DO20151030>.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

apologize on behalf of the government on the twentieth anniversary of the peace accords for a particularly brutal massacre.¹²⁷ He also pledged further investigation into abuses and a program of reparations for victims.¹²⁸ In his inaugural address, President Sánchez Cerén pledged to continue support for civil war victims but there has been no concerted attempt to repeal the amnesty law through executive or judicial action.

In terms of democratic oversight of the military, the executive branch lacks a politically appointed civilian minister of defense. The legislature, on the other hand, has very recently increased its role in oversight with its passage of the 2015 Security Tax. The military has still not been held accountable, however, for widespread abuse during the bloody civil war. Successive FMLN presidencies have taken very modest measures to revamp democratic oversight of the military. If compared to civil–military relations during and before the civil war, civilian-led democracy has been improved and there have been no direct challenges to civilian leadership; however, compared the two other countries studied in this thesis, there is still much reform required to bring positive democratic oversight of the military to El Salvador.

3. Military Effectiveness under Democracy

The Salvadoran armed forces face the overwhelming mission of stabilizing a country ravaged by violence. While not alone in the fight, they are increasingly called on to assist the National Civil Police. The two main Salvadoran *maras* (or street gangs) are *Mara Salvatrucha* and *Calle Dieciocho*; each has roots in the United States and for a number of reasons have become stronger and more violent in the last decade.¹²⁹ The *maras* operate in a transnational network, at times working with Mexican and Colombian cartels, and participate in drug and human trafficking, extortion, kidnappings, and

¹²⁷ Funes' public apology was for the army's *el Mozote* massacre in 1981, which resulted in over 800 men, women, and children being trapped and brutally tortured, raped and killed.

¹²⁸ Seelke, *El Salvador*, 3.

¹²⁹ Some claim that the *maras* were “exported” to El Salvador from their Los Angeles birthplace via U.S. deportation programs, others highlight that the two current *maras* overtook preexisting street gangs; all point to underlying conditions such as high poverty, marginalized segments of society, and youth populations isolated from education and employment opportunities; see Bruneau et al., *Maras: Gang Violence and Security in Central America*.

contract killings (*sicariatos*).¹³⁰ Considering the current security environment, the limited resources at the state's disposal, and the high public trust in the armed forces, it is not surprising that the armed forces are so actively engaged in confronting the *maras* and their narco-trafficking cartel allies.

In addition to their most prominent role of domestic security, the Salvadoran military has also engaged in multinational coalitions to include the U.S.-led coalitions in Iraq and Afghanistan. While the total troop contribution was limited, El Salvador was an early troop-supplier to the coalition in Iraq (sending about 380 troops between 2003 and 2009) as well as supplying a smaller contingent of advisors and trainers to Afghanistan from 2011 to 2014. The presence of Latin American armed forces in either of these campaigns is unique and portrays the willingness of the Salvadoran government to support U.S. foreign policy. The United States, as a result, provides considerable aid to El Salvador in the form of over \$20 million in annual bilateral aid, two five-year development assistance grants worth a total of \$738 million, and selection of El Salvador as the only Latin American nation to the Partnership for Growth Initiative to strengthen trade and investment ties between the two countries.¹³¹

El Salvador is also a troop contributor to UN Peacekeeping Operations. In 2014, the Salvadoran military had 87 troops deployed to the UNPKOs in Haiti and Lebanon.¹³² While the participation rates are low, support for UNPKOs and coalitions in Iraq and Afghanistan have provided a level of prestige to the small Central American nation's military, while simultaneously staying engaged in domestic security operations.

With a respected force and one that is actively and visibly engaged domestically, it is unexpected, then, that the country's defense budget is only 0.62% of the Gross Domestic Product.¹³³ Surprisingly, the election of FMLN presidents in 2009 and 2014

¹³⁰ Sonja Wolf, "Street Gangs of El Salvador," 43–44.

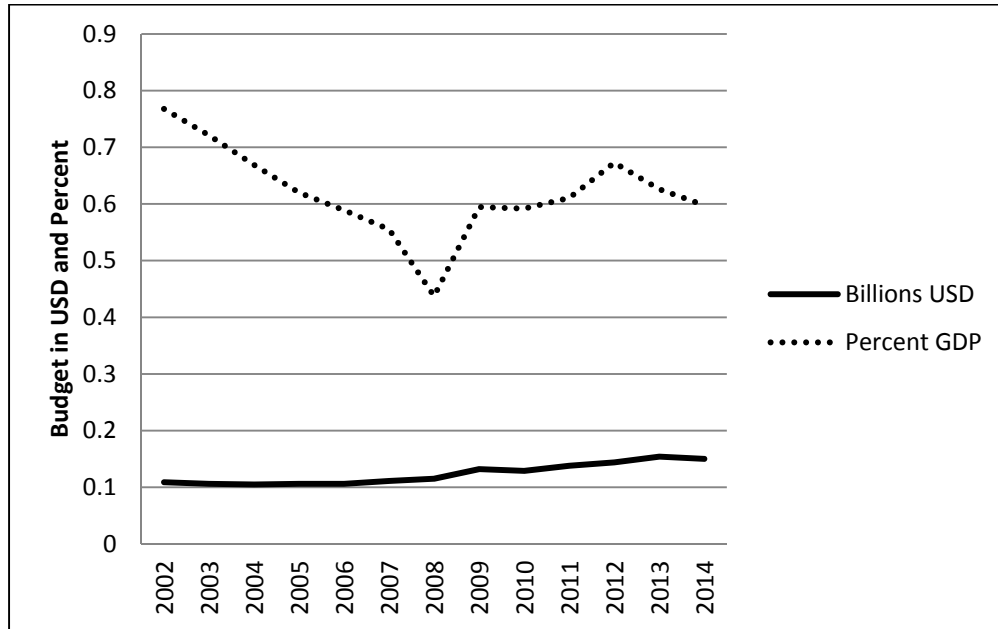
¹³¹ The grants are successive Millennium Challenge Corporation 'compacts;' the first, completed in 2006, was worth \$461M, the second, signed in 2013, is worth \$277M; Seelke, *El Salvador*, 12–21. El Salvador's support for U.S. policy also described in Jane's Information Group (Sentinel Security Assessment).

¹³² Latin American Security and Defence Network.

¹³³ The International Institute for Strategic Studies (The Military Balance).

saw moderate increases in terms of overall defense spending and as a percent of GDP; however, El Salvador is still well below the defense spending regional average, as illustrated in Figure 3.

Figure 3. El Salvador's Defense Budget



Adapted from the International Institute for Strategic Studies (The Military Balance)

There are two likely explanations for this low level of defense spending by the Salvadoran government. First, the state has low tax rates and a low capacity to collect tax revenue from its population. State institutions are lacking, as previously mentioned, due to the high levels of corruption and the lingering effects of civil war. The military is underfunded much like other state institutions, despite being held in relatively high esteem by the population. As noted in the previous section, the 2015 Security Tax is a very positive step to supply increased resources to the comprehensive Sánchez Cerén initiative, *El Salvador Seguro*; its implementation should be closely monitored to ensure the new tax is not evaded or misappropriated.

Second, security and defense are systemically underfunded because those that can afford it often hire private security guards to fill the void in state (and taxpayer) funded

security. The PNC is a force of roughly 22,000 police; in 2013, there were over 28,000 registered private security guards.¹³⁴ This phenomenon is a break-down in government-led citizen security and results in a country of two worlds. One is a world in which security can be guaranteed through private funding; another is a world surrounded by the battle between vicious *maras* with underpaid and perhaps corrupt security forces. The current security situation exacerbates longstanding issues of poverty and inequality in El Salvador, something that will almost certainly need significant international assistance to overcome.

While the Salvadoran military has been lauded for its participation in operations abroad and—at least to date—has been well-received by much of the population for its support of the PNC, the civilian government has not dedicated sufficient resources to allow the military and civilian forces to effectively counter a very robust network of nefarious street gangs and well-funded narco-trafficking cartels. In the short-term, continued and increased international assistance is needed to turn the tide of insecurity in El Salvador. In the long-term, there must be a diminishing of the norm among the upper segments of society that security can be privately purchased and, instead, the government must gain the capacity to effectively enforce a rule of law in El Salvador.

D. THE SÁNCHEZ CERÉN LEGACY

Having been elected as President of El Salvador in 2014, Salvador Sánchez Cerén has not been the commander-in-chief long enough to evaluate his full legacy on civil–military relations. Some trends can be analyzed, however. The first one is troubling.

Although Sánchez Cerén brokered a new plan through an inclusive dialogue on citizen security—one that aims to tackle root causes and the systemic issues of El Salvador—a more recent initiative has declared the *maras* “terrorist organizations.”¹³⁵ The shift in approach is not only in nomenclature: minimum prison sentences have been increased and affiliation with a *mara* becomes not only a criminal offense but a charge of

¹³⁴ Seelke, *El Salvador*, 9.

¹³⁵ Juan José Dalton, “El Salvador juzgará a 300 pandilleros por terrorismo,” *El País*, August 8, 2015, http://internacional.elpais.com/internacional/2015/08/12/actualidad/1439413431_269936.html

terrorism. Considerable pressure has been placed on the Sánchez Cerén administration following the break-down of a gang truce under his predecessor's administration. The truce, mediated between gang leaders by a senior Funes minister and a Catholic bishop in 2012, had immediate effects on reducing gang violence; however, critics also point out that it legitimized the gangs, giving them more clout and strength.¹³⁶ The truce was short-lived and is now highly unpopular. Violence has jumped back up and Sánchez Cerén now declares that “we will not engage in dialogue with criminals.”¹³⁷ The chosen response to a recent surge in gang violence has been to declare *Mara Salvatrucha* and *Calle Dieciocho* as terrorist organizations. This new, hardline approach will put strains on a military that is increasingly called on to engage in domestic security operations as well taking attention away from the long-term approaches to reducing gang violence.¹³⁸

A second trend under President Sánchez Cerén has been a balancing act between advancing the leftist causes of his FMLN while also appealing to international donors. As a deputy and as vice president, Sánchez Cerén championed educational programs to increase literacy across the country. In this sense, as a politician and now as president, Sánchez Cerén has placed higher emphasis on causes that drove him to teaching and less so to the causes that drove him to become a guerrilla commander. Reaching out to leftist governments in the region, Sánchez Cerén has received backing from ALBA to put computers in rural classrooms and from Cuba to bring medical workers to impoverished communities.¹³⁹ Meanwhile, Sánchez Cerén maintains positive ties with the United States and international organizations such as the World Bank. With so much of his country in need of reform, development, and investment, Sánchez Cerén has placed his

¹³⁶ A comprehensive account of the 2012 truce provided in Douglas Farah and Pamela Phillips Lum, “Central American Gangs and Transnational Criminal Organizations: The Changing Relationships in a Time of Turmoil,” *International Assessment and Strategy Center* (February, 2013).

¹³⁷ Dalton, “El Salvador juzgará.”

¹³⁸ As described in Bruneau and Dammert, “Conclusion: The Dilemma of Fighting Gangs in New Democracies,” in *Maras: Gang Violence and Security in Central America* eds. Bruneau, et al. (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2011).

¹³⁹ ALBA is a coalition of “Bolivarian” states including Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia, Nicaragua, and Cuba; Lucho Granados Ceja, “Gains in Education and Poverty Reduction Continue During Salvadoran President’s First Year in Office,” *TeleSur*, May, 31, 2015, <http://www.telesurtv.net/english/analysis/Salvadoran-President-Prioritizes-Education-Poverty-Reduction-20150531-0013.html>.

political priorities on reducing poverty and raising investment and economic growth. The institutions of positive civil–military relations remain either largely absent or unchanged.

Examining the early trends of the presidency of ex-insurgent Salvador Sánchez Cerén, and considering the array of challenges facing El Salvador, it appears that matters of security and defense will continue to be a highly autonomous arena managed by the Civilian National Police and the Salvadoran armed forces. It is seemingly paradoxical that President Sánchez Cerén can make an inclusive call on civil society to develop a plan addressing citizen security and then declare all the youth entangled in the vicious world of street gangs “terrorists”—however, El Salvador has a long history of being a country of extremes.

IV. URUGUAY

Unlike many of its South American neighbors, relatively little has been written on the subject of civil–military relations in Uruguay. Following a pacted transition to democracy in 1984, the military remained highly influential in Uruguay under the ensuing conservative governments. Not until the 2005 election of the *Frente Amplio* candidate, President Tabaré Vázquez, did the military see its first true test of contestation with elected officials. Uruguayan civil society’s deep-rooted appreciation of democracy and its general satisfaction in its government have provided a base for positive civil–military relations. The first section gives a brief military history of Uruguay from 1973 to the present. The second section offers a succinct biography of ex-*Tupamaro* insurgent José “Pepe” Mujica. The third section analyzes contemporary civil–military relations in Uruguay. The chapter concludes with a portrayal of President Mujica as a pragmatic politician whose focus on the future of Uruguay trumped any past misgivings he may have had with his former captors, the Uruguayan armed forces.

A. URUGUAYAN MILITARY HISTORY: 1973–PRESENT

The narrative leading up to the military *golpe de estado* in Uruguay fits much of the regional theme across Latin America. In the context of the Cold War, political ideologies varied from traditionally conservative and pro-West parties to socialist and pro-Soviet communist parties. In Uruguay, the most radical sect of the Socialist Party spawned a movement called the *Tupamaros*. While strictly political in its outset, the group transformed into an armed guerilla movement in conflict with the government and armed forces of Uruguay. From the late 1960s to 1972, under increasingly repressive conditions, the *Tupamaros* engaged in robberies, kidnappings, and assassinations. Perhaps their most famous operation was the kidnaping of British Ambassador to Uruguay, Sir Geoffrey Jackson.¹⁴⁰ Unlike other Leftist insurgencies in Latin America, the *Tupamaros* were nearly defeated by 1973; however, the standing mandate provided

¹⁴⁰ Ambassador Jackson’s account in captivity was captured in his book: Geoffrey Jackson, *People’s Prison* (London, United Kingdom: Readers Union, 1974).

by President Juan María Bordaberry to his armed forces was to restore public security and it afforded the military great power in relation to the democratic regime.

In 1973, the Uruguayan military seized control of Congress and the country entered civilian-military authoritarian rule.¹⁴¹ President Bordaberry remained in office while the armed forces received wide authority to manage the country and restore political, social, and economic order. As characterized by a Uruguayan Navy officer, “the cleavage between the historical political parties and the [Leftist] *Frente Amplio* facilitated the polarization of Uruguayan society and brought discredit to the politicians. The process ended with the rise of a military dictatorship.”¹⁴² It was widely perceived within the military that it was the only organization with the capability to provide “the security required for the country to achieve progress and economic growth.”¹⁴³ Under the ensuing twelve years of authoritarian rule, it is estimated that between 3000 and 4000 Uruguayans were imprisoned and several hundred were killed or “disappeared” both within Uruguay and abroad.¹⁴⁴ Political parties were outlawed and the regime targeted most violently the members of the Communist Party and *Tupamaros*.

Democracy was restored in Uruguay in 1984 following a pacted agreement between the military and emerging political leaders. Included in their transition from political power, as part of the *Pacto del Club Naval*, the Uruguayan military and other leaders under the authoritarian regime were granted punitive immunity of human rights abuses committed during the dictatorship.¹⁴⁵ While initially passed by a newly restored Parliament, the law was taken to referendum twice and validated by popular consent of

¹⁴¹ In contrast to full military coups and takeovers of governments in the region, Uruguay retained a civilian president while the military took control of many other aspects of the state; hence the term “civilian-military authoritarian rule.”

¹⁴² Eduardo Ulery, “The Uruguayan Armed Forces and the Challenge of 21st Century Peacekeeping Operations” (master’s thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, December 2005), 26.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 27.

¹⁴⁴ Many operations were carried out in neighboring Argentina, also under authoritarian military rule; Peter J. Meyer, *Uruguay: Political and Economic Conditions and U.S. Relations* (CRS Report No. 40909) (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, January 4, 2010), 4.

¹⁴⁵ Tiago Pedro Vales, “Operações de Paz como Incentivo ao Profissionalismo das Forças Armadas: O Caso Uruguaio,” *Boletim Meridiano* 12, no. 128(2011), 39.

the people.¹⁴⁶ Conservative Presidents were elected in Uruguay until the first electoral victory of the Left in 2005 by Tabaré Vázquez of a coalition of Left-wing parties known as the *Frente Amplio*.

B. “PEPE” THE REVOLUTIONARY

In 2009, following the five-year term held by Tabaré Vázquez, the *Frente Amplio* nominated ex-*Tupamaro* insurgent José “Pepe” Mujica. The following paragraphs provide a background of Mujica during his time as a leader of the *Tupamaros*.

Joining the group as a political dissident of the traditional political parties, the *Blancos* and the *Colorados*, José Mujica helped establish the socialist *Tupamaro* organization in the late 1960s. The *Tupamaros* were inspired by the Cuban Revolution and Mujica saw the organization shift from politics to violent acts. Mujica himself commanded operations to include a bank robbery where he allegedly shot a police officer.¹⁴⁷ Having himself been shot as many as six times, Mujica was frequently involved in actions in and around Montevideo. Mujica’s most famous action as a *Tupamaro* came in a daring escape from prison of over one hundred insurgent captives. This and other actions brought great fame to Mujica’s *Tupamaro* past.

After being captured a third time, José Mujica spent a total of fourteen years detained during the military dictatorship. He spent two years in solitary confinement where his only companions were “a tiny frog and rats with whom he shared crumbs of bread.”¹⁴⁸ He went years without having anything to read and—despite not speaking in great detail of his captivity—admits that he learned that “one can always start again.”¹⁴⁹ Following the transition to democracy, political prisoners were released and Mujica worked with others to form the *Movimiento de Participación Popular*, which would join other parties of the Left to form the *Frente Amplio*.

¹⁴⁶ Referenda held in 1989 and 2009: retained with 56% and 52% support, respectively.

¹⁴⁷ Simon Romero, “After Years in Solitary, an Austere Life for Uruguay’s President,” *New York Times*, January 4, 2013, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/05/world/americas/after-years-in-solitary-an-austere-life-as-uruguays-president.html?_r=0

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

With Mujica's insurgent past as a leader of the *Tupamaros* as well as his fourteen years as a prisoner of the military dictatorship, contentious civil–military relations could have been predicted and expected. Upon his election, Mujica had not only a well-publicized past as an imprisoned guerrilla leader, but also as a keen and successful politician. Mujica was first elected to Uruguay's lower house of Congress in 1994, then to the Senate in 1999, and was appointed as the Minister of Livestock, Agriculture, and Fisheries during the Vázquez Administration. His most recent political accomplishments, not his guerrilla past, gave him the reputation of a “pragmatist and consensus-builder.”¹⁵⁰

C. CONTEMPORARY CIVIL–MILITARY RELATIONS IN URUGUAY

Positive civil–military relations in Uruguay can be largely credited to low levels of violence and a robust Ministry of Defense, especially by Latin American standards. With relatively mature democratic institutions, there is less of Pion-Berlin's “Political Management” of the military than can be seen elsewhere in the region. Democracy is held in very high esteem by Uruguayans. Polling data shows Uruguay as a regional leader in preferring democracy as the most desirable form of government (70.9% of the population) and rejecting any return to authoritarian rule, even in dire circumstances.¹⁵¹

The domestic climate in Uruguay can be considered unique in comparison to other Latin American countries. Uruguay has limited pressure to use its military for public security in comparison to neighboring Brazil and certainly countries such as Colombia, Mexico and most of the Central American nations. This lack of pressure stems from both the relatively low crime rates when compared to other countries in the region as well as a Uruguayan populace that is mildly content with the services provided by police and penal institutions. *Latinobarómetro* shows that, among Latin Americans, Uruguayans have very high trust in their police and judicial institutions.¹⁵²

¹⁵⁰ Meyer, *Uruguay: Political and Economic Conditions*, 7.

¹⁵¹ The Latin American average for vowing a democratic government over all others is 56.2%; *Latinobarómetro* 2013.

¹⁵² Uruguay is more than 10 percentage points higher than the Latin American average for police and judicial confidence levels; *Latinobarómetro*, 2013.

Leading up to the 2005 elections, the *Frente Amplio* had included in its campaign platform a call for investigation of human rights abuses and a reduction in budget and autonomy afforded to the armed forces.¹⁵³ The transition from military-friendly parties to the *Frente Amplio*, especially considering its pronounced platform in conflict with military interests, is viewed as a civil–military relations milestone: “the armed forces orderly submitted to the ascent to government of its once internal enemy.”¹⁵⁴

The following sections apply the civil–military relations framework to Uruguay and assess the democratic incorporation of its military, the democratic oversight of its military, and the military effectiveness under Uruguayan democracy.

1. Democratic Incorporation of the Military

President Vázquez, the first *Frente Amplio* president, broke ground for major progress in institutionalizing and incorporating the armed forces into the Uruguayan democracy. Shortly after assuming office, Vázquez initiated a public debate on defense (*Debate Nacional sobre la Defensa*) with the goal of opening a dialogue among a diverse set of actors across society.¹⁵⁵ This debate resulted in a new post of National Intelligence Coordinator as well as the National Defense Act of 2010 (*Ley Marco de Defensa Nacional*).¹⁵⁶ Both the consolidation of intelligence operations under a new coordinator as well as the rewriting of national law reorganized and cemented the military under civilian control. The National Defense Act not only assigned traditional roles and missions to the military such as the defense of national sovereignty and strategic resources, but also allowed the military to engage in public works, education, and health missions as assigned by the President and Minister of Defense.¹⁵⁷ One additional role

¹⁵³ Julián Gonzalez Guyer, “The Frente Amplio in Government and the Military Situation: After Five Years, the Most Complex Challenges Arrive,” Latin American Security and Defence Network ,2010 Edition.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Nicolás Alvarez, “Control Civil Sobre la Inteligencia de Estado de Uruguay: Un Análisis Basado en el Proceso de Negociación,” paper presented at XIII Jornada de Investigación de la Facultad de Ciencias Sociales, Universidad de la Republica, Montevideo, Uruguay, September 15, 2014.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 17.

¹⁵⁷ *National Defense Act of 2010: Ley No. 18.650* (Uruguayan Ministry of Defense) Montevideo, Uruguay: August 3, 2010.

was codified under President Vázquez, which further incorporated the military into greater national priorities: the role of Uruguayan forces abroad in support of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations.¹⁵⁸

With a small population and limited economic strength, Uruguay has employed varying methods to play a relevant role in regional and international relations. Formal involvement in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations began under the Lacalle Presidency (1990-95), as the civilian government sought a method to maintain military professionalism while also obtaining external funding to lessen the military burden on the national budget.¹⁵⁹ Since joining the large community of nations supplying troops to the UN, Uruguay has been a leader in per capita participation. Since 2003, Uruguay has supplied between 1,800 and 2,600 peacekeepers, frequently in the top ten of overall contributors to UNPKOs.¹⁶⁰ Furthermore, Uruguay has not limited its involvement to basic conscripts of infantry and military police, but has routinely supplied engineers, medics, communications technicians, and naval forces.¹⁶¹

Building on the Uruguayan reputation in UN Peacekeeping Operations, the *Frente Amplio* formally included this mission in doctrine and linked the military's mission abroad with more general foreign policy.¹⁶² The peacekeeping mission “emerged as a golden opportunity” for the armed forces when it was “returning to its barracks under conditions of domestic socio-political isolation.”¹⁶³ While on the campaign trail, there were signals that both of the *Frente Amplio* presidents would downsize the Uruguayan military's presence abroad; however, troop numbers remained above 1,800 throughout each President's term with only a slight decrease under President Mujica.¹⁶⁴ With

¹⁵⁸ Julián Gonzalez Guyer, “La Contribución de Uruguay para Operaciones de Paz de Naciones Unidas: Acerca de las Motivaciones y la Interpretación de su Record,” *Revista Uruguaya de Ciencia Política* 23, no. 1 (2014).

¹⁵⁹ Vales, “Operações de Paz,” 40.

¹⁶⁰ Gonzalez Guyer, “La Contribución de Uruguay.”

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Ibid.; translation by author.

¹⁶⁴ Maximum troop presence abroad was 2,588 in 2007, under President Vázquez.

growing expertise and recognition as an exporter of peacekeepers, Uruguay continues to actively engage in these operations. Furthermore, to strengthen its case to become a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, Uruguay successfully highlighted its longstanding role in UNPKOs as a leading argument to hold the Latin American seat on this powerful global body from 2016 to 2017.¹⁶⁵

In addition to the deployment of UN peacekeepers, President Mujica found another way to pursue his goals in foreign policy. In an open letter to President Obama and his own countrymen, Mujica allowed for the transfer of six Guantanamo detainees to Uruguay. While calling on Uruguayans to receive the prisoners in solidarity, Mujica was also able to elevate the issue of Cuba's hemispheric isolation and the humanitarian injustice of the Guantanamo detention center.¹⁶⁶ This action brought international headlines, both because of the difficulty Obama had encountered in transferring those jailed at Guantanamo but also in the symbolic action of an ex-political prisoner receiving six detainees into the small South American nation. Mujica was able to further propagate the peaceful image of Uruguay abroad while also putting the long-standing frozen U.S.-Cuba relations back in the media—relations that only months later began to thaw.

The Uruguayan military has been incorporated into the broader government and has been used as a tool to pursue national goals. The greatest accomplishment of the democratic incorporation of the military was the National Defense Act.

2. Democratic Oversight of the Military

The Ministry of Defense in Uruguay was established in 1828, the same year that the Treaty of Montevideo was signed and neighbors Argentina and Brazil recognized Uruguay as an independent nation.¹⁶⁷ The Minister has been a member of the military fifteen times and has been civilian twenty-four times; the current Minister of Defense is a

¹⁶⁵ Gonzalez Guyer, "La Contribución de Uruguay."

¹⁶⁶ Massimo De Ricco, "From Guantanamo to Montevideo and on to Havana," *Al-Jazeera*, December 17, 2014, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2014/12/from-guantanamo-montevideo-hav-2014121715813982219.html>.

¹⁶⁷ "Historia," Uruguayan Ministry of Defense, accessed September 18, 2015, <http://www.mdn.gub.uy/?q=historia>

civilian, as is required by contemporary Uruguayan law.¹⁶⁸ Furthermore, the Ministry has eight directorates with over 1,400 civilian employees and a military Joint Staff that is subordinate to the Minister of Defense and serves to advise the National Defense Council (*Consejo de Defensa Nacional*, or CODENA).¹⁶⁹ The National Defense Act of 2010 laid out legislative duties that assigned congress the function of designating the size of the armed forces as well as declaring war. In addition, congress has the responsibilities of overseeing military education and development programs and approving military promotions.¹⁷⁰

With a large Ministry of Defense and considerable civilian staffing, Uruguay has invested significant resources to the oversight of its armed forces. One reason could be the simple fact that Uruguay is one of the wealthiest nations per capita in Latin America. Conversely, Uruguayans are likely keen to maintain civilian control of the armed forces, still cognizant of the civilian-military authoritarian rule in the 1970s and 1980s, and have built a strong institution to actively oversee the military. While the institutions of positive civil-military relations have been strengthened in recent years, there exists an open issue and debate related to the military's past.

While the *Frente Amplio* advertised its aim at bringing justice for human rights abuses, Uruguay has seen only moderate accountability carried out. A main sticking point in pursuing justice is the 1986 Expiry Law (*Ley de Caducidad*), which grants immunity to state officials who carried out political violence during the dictatorship. Under President Vázquez, the Expiry Law was reinterpreted to withhold protection from crimes committed before the coup of 1973, allowing for the trial of over six hundred members of the military, as well as actions taking place outside of Uruguay—unlocking charges against former President Bordaberry and *de facto* dictator General Alvarez.¹⁷¹ The success to bring justice for human rights abuses “clearly demonstrates that where the

¹⁶⁸ Latin American Security and Defence Network.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ *National Defense Act of 2010*.

¹⁷¹ Elin Skaar, “Wavering Courts: From Impunity to Accountability in Uruguay,” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 45 (Aug 2013), 493.

executive has political will, progress in retributive justice can be made.”¹⁷² This political will seemed to be reduced after the Vázquez term in office with fewer charges carried out and no new attempt to rescind the Expiry Law by President Mujica. A major reason for this scaling back of justice was the 2009 failed popular referendum to repeal the Expiry Law, the same year President Mujica was elected. Rather than continue the aggressive push of his predecessor, Mujica heeded the message from Uruguayan society and focused his political will elsewhere.

With the continuation of the Expiry Law a level of tension lingers in what some Uruguayan politicians believe is the correct level of democratic oversight and accountability. Within the *Frente Amplio* there is debate as to how aggressively the repeal of the Expiry Law should be pursued. Despite this open issue, Uruguay has spent considerable resources and set up strong institutions to provide a level of oversight that is uncommon in the region.

3. Military Effectiveness under Democracy

As previously mentioned, Uruguay’s military is only minimally used in providing public security. While the Uruguayan armed forces are not constitutionally prohibited from engaging in domestic security activities, such as in neighboring Argentina, the low level of insecurity coupled with functioning police and courts allow the military to refrain from being used in public security missions. Even under growing threats of narco-trafficking, there has not been a large counter-drug role for the armed forces; instead, the National Police remains at the forefront of such domestic missions with talks of transferring soldiers with peacekeeping experience under the command of the National Police.¹⁷³ There are, however, other domestic missions assigned to Uruguay’s military.

The Uruguayan military is deployed domestically in many unconventional missions—and is authorized to do so under law. In 2013, the military was deployed to support the Ministries of Public Health and Social Development to conduct small public works projects and assist with logistics of medical operations for poor and remote parts of

¹⁷² Skaar, “Wavering Courts,” 493–94

¹⁷³ Vales, “Operações de Paz,” 41.

the country.¹⁷⁴ As a part of a broader national environmental protection program, the navy has an outreach project to educate and familiarize youth with the sea.¹⁷⁵ The military has also assisted in cases of natural disaster and emergency, using its equipment and capabilities in times of increased need. Uruguay has recovered trust in its armed forces, maintained high public security, and unconventionally used its military in times of peace; however, there should be mild concern that using the military in place of other state actors to conduct the relevant domestic missions could prevent adequate institutional capacity from developing in the Ministries of Public Health and Social Development.

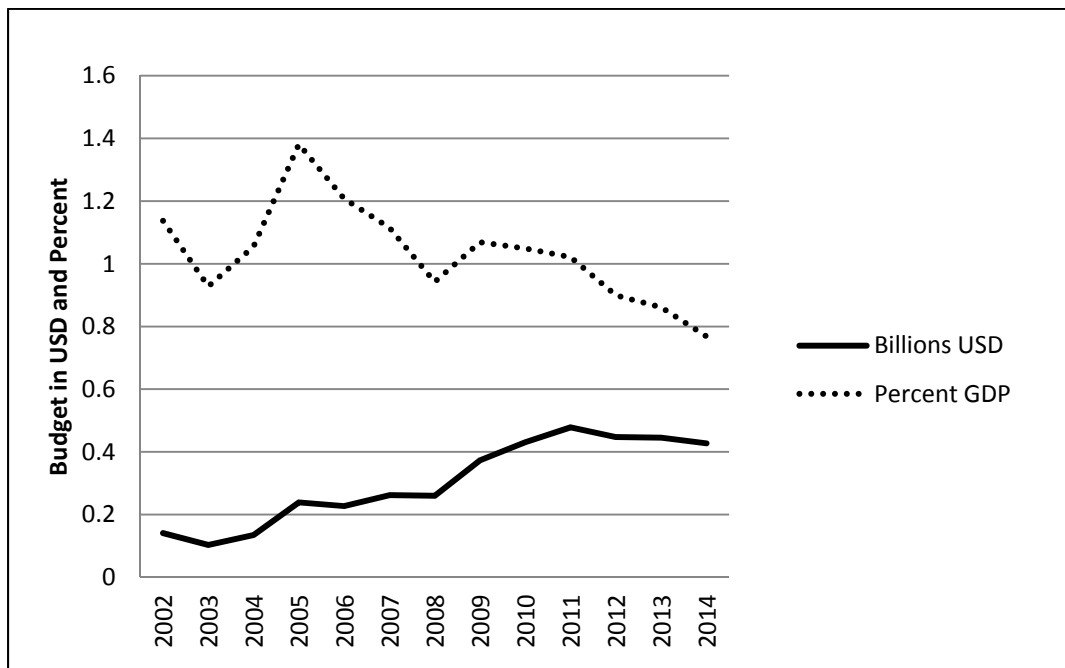
Uruguay spends slightly less than the regional average on defense—the Latin American average in 2014 was 1.28% of GDP—but is also more limited in its use of the military.¹⁷⁶ Uruguay does not have the need to fund a military combatting insurgency or widespread crime. Likewise, as a leading UN Peacekeeping Operations contributor, Uruguay receives UN compensation that offsets some expenses. In the years under the *Frente Amplio*, the Uruguayan defense budget has seen a decrease when analyzed in terms of percentage of GDP; however, the total expenditure has actually increased considerably (see Figure 4). Most of the increase took place under President Vázquez and coincided with very prosperous years for Uruguay. The national economy continued to grow under President Mujica while defense spending started to level off, hence the decrease in the defense budget as a percent of GDP from 2010 to 2014. Just as Mujica continued much of the work by his predecessor in incorporating the defense institutions under Uruguayan democracy, his approach to defense spending was very much *status quo ante*.

¹⁷⁴ Latin American Security and Defence Network.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ The International Institute for Strategic Studies (The Military Balance).

Figure 4. Uruguay's Defense Budget



Adapted from the International Institute for Strategic Studies (The Military Balance)

The Uruguayan military has been used to great success internationally in support of UN Peacekeeping Operations and domestically in small, unconventional missions. The military is not used heavily for public security, yet receives ample resources to carry out its assigned missions. There is no sign of military “mission creep” into unwanted domains nor severe cuts to spending, largely due to the institutionalized and positive relationship between the military and its civilian leaders.

D. THE MUJICA LEGACY

As already the inheritor of major, positive civil–military reforms, President Mujica received a tempting idea from a fellow Latin American leader. Costa Rican President Oscar Arias publicly called on Mujica to abolish the Uruguayan military. Arias wrote to “Pepe the Revolutionary” explaining that “armies are the enemies of development, the enemies of peace, the enemies of freedom, and the enemies of joy.”¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁷ Security Assistance Monitor, “Arias’ Request for ‘Pepe’ the Revolutionary,” April 28, 2010, <http://securityassistance.org/blog/arias-request-pepe-revolutionary>

Arias, the president of the first nation in the world to abolish its military, recalled Mujica's past when calling on his disbanding of the military: "You who suffered under the yoke of oppression, now have the opportunity to rid forever from that yoke the children of tomorrow."¹⁷⁸

President Mujica, no longer the revolutionary, cited the need of a military to continue the fight against poverty; he responded with measured and practical words: "my personal opinion does not matter [because] when you are president, you do not do what you want to do, you do just what you can."¹⁷⁹ Mujica's election coincided with a renewed call from the Uruguayan people to let stand the Expiry Law, granting protections to human rights violators. As a pragmatic politician, Mujica decided to not destabilize civil-military relations with a new repeal attempt of the Expiry Law—and he was certainly not going to try to disband the armed forces.

José Mujica retained many of the ideals of an inspired revolutionary upon becoming President of Uruguay. He has been referred to by many publications and newspapers as the "humblest" national leader—a title he earned by donating much of his presidential salary, driving an old Volkswagen Beetle, and living at home in very modest conditions instead of the presidential palace. His image has brought attention to his small nation, but his actions have been a deliberate mix of savvy international gestures and measured domestic maneuvers. As the recipient of a stable democracy and positive civil-military relations, Mujica handed the Presidency back to his predecessor, Tabaré Vázquez. Increasing exposure in the international community often requires news-worthy actions and notable characters—especially for a small nation like Uruguay. Maintaining positive civil-military relations, however, requires pragmatic political action. President Mujica and the *Frente Amplio* have worked to institutionalize their relationship with the military while also reinforcing and codifying the Uruguayan military's role as an international peacekeeper. Civil-military relations have been improved and lessons can be learned from José Mujica and his party's methods over the last ten years.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

V. TRENDS AND RESULTS

Building on the research conducted in this comparative analysis of civil–military relations in Brazil, El Salvador, and Uruguay—as well as drawing on observations from across Latin America—three trends are presented in this chapter. The trends bring to light successful approaches for countries working on strengthening civil–military relations while also exposing common roadblocks to this process across the region. Following the trends, the results of the analysis of the three case studies are displayed according to the framework described in Chapter I and applied in Chapters II, III, and IV. Finally, this chapter closes the thesis with a conclusion.

A. TRENDS

Three trends are presented. The first, gleaned from Douglass North’s concept of the “increasing returns” of institutions, highlights the roles of institutions in civil–military relations in Latin America. The second, in a nod to scholars of culture such as Clifford Geertz and Samuel Huntington, looks beyond institutional legacies of civil–military relations to see what cultural progress has been made. The third trend, underscoring one of the five requisite arenas to consolidated democracies according to Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, shows both promising and troubling shifts in attitude among civil societies in Latin American nations.

1. Institutional Return on Investment

In his book *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*, Douglass North asserted that “the interdependent web of an institutional matrix produces massive increasing returns.”¹⁸⁰ North pitches the value in undertaking the “large initial setup costs” that are associated with institutions, pointing to the “increasing returns” they provide over time. While his assessment is focused on economics, the parallel is appropriate as a trend learned in this analysis of civil–military relations.

¹⁸⁰ Douglass C. North, *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 95.

The lesson learned on the role of institutions here is twofold. First, placing a civilian in charge of a Ministry of Defense is insufficient to claim civilian oversight of the military. The individual must have the political clout to command respect within the democratic system and must be accompanied by a staff capable of overseeing the myriad points of engagement between civilian and military leaders. That is, there must be a true political investment made to a Ministry of Defense. This is particularly important as militaries engage in more complex roles and missions that inherently require increased cooperation and coordination between militaries and their governments.

Second, there are high costs associated with building the aforementioned institutions. Unsurprisingly, the countries with higher levels of development have exhausted more resources on developing strong institutions. This point is not to say that the investment is not worthwhile or insurmountable.

There is a first, obvious benefit to investing in strong institutions of civil–military relations: to insure civilian control of the military and avoid a military coup d’état. Additionally, the persistence of positive civil–military relations in all cases analyzed *despite* the election of former adversaries of the military can be largely attributed to the “institutionalization” of civil–military relations in all three countries. While it was entirely plausible that the election of an ex-insurgent to any of the three presidencies could have resulted in a negative swing of the relationship with the military—perhaps all the way to the “vindictive” case of civil–military relations in Argentina or the “politicization” in the Bolivarian cases of Venezuela, Ecuador, and Bolivia¹⁸¹—the institutionalization of civil–military relations served, to some degree, as a buffer against any personal vendetta of an ex-insurgent president and his or her relationship with the armed forces.

A third benefit to mature institutions is that with increased civilian oversight through various institutions, funds allocated to defense can be managed more efficiently. With a more efficient appropriation of defense funding, and aligning defense initiatives

¹⁸¹ These negative examples of civil–military relations described in the Literature Review in Chapter I, summarized from Norden “The Making of Socialist Soldiers”; Barany, *The Soldier and the Changing State: Building Democratic Armies in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas*.

with broader national goals, efficiencies brought on by defense institutions can bring increasing advantages over time.

The value of strong institutions is a key point of intervention for international donors. With clear shortcomings in its institutional capacity, the United States should consider increased concentration of security assistance to El Salvador—and other countries of similar deficiencies like Guatemala and Honduras—toward institutional strengthening. With patience, the returns on investment in institutions will surely be realized.

2. Culture Matters

Shifting away from the oft-studied field of institutions, there is a need for increased study of the cultural dynamics of civil–military relations. In 1973, Clifford Geertz pointed to culture as a way to study the significance or meaning associated to an institution where traditional and empirical study fell short.¹⁸² More recently, Samuel Huntington examined how culture “affects the extent to which and the ways in which societies achieve or fail to achieve progress in economic development and political democratization.”¹⁸³ Culture matters in the maturation of democracy, and this assertion is certainly valid in the domain of civil–military relations.

Perhaps the greatest effect on the relationship between a democratically elected ex-insurgent president and the nation’s military is the full closure it can provide to a past era of repression. While all three cases analyzed have continued their respective amnesty laws for past human-rights abuses, what remains unresolved in the legal and judicial systems has experienced great strides forward from a cultural perspective. This is best portrayed in the Brazilian case.

As described in the Chapter II, Dilma Rousseff took two actions to bring in a new age of civil–military relations in Brazil. While restricted from prosecuting, her Truth

¹⁸² Clifford Geertz, “Thick Description: Toward an Interpretative Theory of Culture,” *The Interpretation of Culture* (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

¹⁸³ Samuel Huntington, “Foreword,” in *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress*, eds. Huntington and Harrison (New York: Basic Books, 2000), xv.

Commission was a public uncovering of many brutal acts committed by the Brazilian military that was delivered with extra emphasis from a woman who had personally suffered torture. She also became the commander-in-chief of a military, some officers of which were still accustomed to speaking with bravado of its “saving of the nation” through its coup d’état in 1964. While institutional reforms to civil–military relations were largely accomplished by her two predecessors, by banning the commemorations and celebrations of the military coup Rousseff set a new cultural tone to the relationship between the civilian government and its subordinate military.

A president who personally suffered under authoritarian rule is in a unique position to lead a nation and a military through this cultural shift. The cases of Brazil and Uruguay feature an ex-insurgent who endured tremendous suffering. While not an insurgent herself, President Michelle Bachelet of Chile can be categorized in a similar manner due to her imprisonment, interrogation, and exile under the brutal dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet. It is perhaps too far a stretch to equate Dilma Rousseff, José Mujica, or Michelle Bachelet as a Latin American Nelson Mandela; however, the comparison is valuable in assessing a positive shift in civil–military relations that allowed a nation to celebrate the achievement of electing a public figure who, like so much of the nation, had suffered under authoritarian repression and set a new tone for civilian supremacy over the military. In this regard, similar to the tremendous leadership exhibited by Nelson Mandela as he led South Africa through the dismembering of apartheid, the leadership of the presidents of Brazil, Uruguay, and Chile should be recognized for the cultural gains achieved toward positive civil–military relations.

3. The Role of Civil Society

To the credit of all three of the case studies in this thesis, political leaders have recently undertaken the task of expanding the dialogue on security and defense to a broad cross-section of their civil societies. In their conditions for a consolidated democracy, Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan point to five “interconnected and mutually reinforcing”

arenas that must exist.¹⁸⁴ The first, civil society, they describe as “self-organizing groups, movements, and individuals, relatively autonomous from the state, [that] attempt to articulate values, create associations and solidarities, and advance their interests.”¹⁸⁵ It is this arena that has seen the most recent and most significant advances among all three countries studied.

In Brazil, under President Cardoso, the process of initiating a public dialogue on defense was led by Minister of Defense Nelson Jobim with the crafting of a National Defense Strategy in 2008. In El Salvador, under President Sánchez Cerén, a dialogue was launched among a wide spectrum of society to craft the plan *El Salvador Seguro*. In Uruguay, President Vázquez initiated a public debate resulting in the National Defense Act of 2010.

In some cases across the region, this civil engagement is also taking place alongside the growth of a civilian population that is increasingly interested and educated in security and defense affairs. As mentioned in the first trend on institutional development, there is a need for a larger pool of civilians with experience and education in defense to further staff most ministries of defense across the region. Likewise, there are few legislators and legislative staffs with active oversight of their militaries. With a public more engaged in security and defense issues, politicians are more incentivized to make these issues a part of their political platforms. That is, with a more engaged civil society there can be more *voluntad política*, or political will. Additionally, a cadre of aids and advisors may even develop to assist lawmakers in their roles of overseeing military budgets. This development seems to be on the cusp of reality in Brazil.

There is a counter-trend, however, that is unsettling in the region. According to *Latinobarómetro*, Latin Americans as a whole are becoming more dissatisfied with democracy as their preferred form of government. According to 2015 surveying, “Latin

¹⁸⁴ Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communism Europe* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996).

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 7.

Americans are disenchanted with politics and highly distrust their political institutions...only 31 percent of those surveyed felt represented by their government.”¹⁸⁶

To put this negative trend of the popularity of democracy alongside the positive trend of the trust in the military could raise some flags for more traditional scholars of civil–military relations focused exclusively on civilian control. It would be too simplistic a calculation, however, to draw this conclusion. As seen in this thesis and presented in full in the Appendix, the military is routinely trusted above law enforcement, penal, and judicial institutions. Likewise, corruption and poor economic performance are leading reasons for public displeasure and rather than the emergence of insurgencies across the region the present phenomenon is of peaceful protest, demonstrations, and a call for investigation of corruption using non-military mechanisms. Putting the current citizen unrest in perspective, “this decade is marked by the ‘hyper-participation’ of citizens”¹⁸⁷ who are demanding greater accountability of elected officials and not of a return to military rule.

B. RESULTS

The framework presented in Chapter I was the foundation of each chapter’s analysis of contemporary civil–military relations. Each pillar of the framework is summarized here with the grade, or degree, of positive civil–military relations assessed to each country. The framework is then displayed at the end of the section in Table 3 to evaluate each country’s overall progress toward positive civil–military relations.

1. Democratic Incorporation of the Military

The new pillar to the framework of civil–military relations, democratic incorporation of the military, has a wide disparity between the two South American nations studied and the Central American nation. In democratic Brazil, significant progress has been made to develop not only a National Defense Policy (1996), by the federal government, but a National Defense Strategy (2012), published by the civilian-led

¹⁸⁶ Marta Lagos, “Latinobarometro: Vast Majority Distrust Their Govt,” Baker Institute, September 25, 2015, <http://bakerinstitute.org/research/latinobarometro-most-dissatisfied-govt/>.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

Ministry of Defense. Similarly, Uruguay published a National Defense Strategy in 2010. The strategies were milestones in clarifying the roles and missions of each country's military and aligning military strategy with broader national goals and interests. This can be seen in both countries' strategic participation in UN Peacekeeping Operations as well as both countries expanding state services to remote parts of the country. This is especially true in President Rousseff's employment of the Brazilian military in support of domestic development. Democratic incorporation of the Brazilian and Uruguayan militaries are assessed as *High*.

Democratic incorporation in El Salvador, on the other hand, faces its single greatest obstacle to positive civil–military relations of clearly defining the military's role in the fight against the *maras*. There is a persistent concern that the 1992 Peace Accords are not being adhered to and, despite an allowance due to an “emergency” security situation, there is no evidence of a diminishing of the military's role in supporting the National Civil Police. There is a history and culture of high military autonomy that must be overcome; one positive note is President Sánchez Cerén's initiative to open a national dialogue on citizen security. El Salvador is assessed as *Medium-Low*.

In drawing a contrast between the highly consolidated democracies of the Southern Cone of South America and El Salvador, the role of a mature civil-society appears to be a leading driver to having a military that is democratically incorporated. The iterative process of developing national and defense strategies in Brazil and Uruguay required a dialogue among politicians and an engaged civil society. This observation, therefore, provides some hope to a less mature Salvadoran democracy in its more recent efforts in engaging in this dialogue to not only tackle its security issues but also democratically incorporate its military.

2. Democratic Oversight of the Military

A similar pattern is observed with respect to the democratic oversight of the military: the South American nations have more mature and institutionalized civil–military relations while El Salvador's institutions are still lacking. Brazil and Uruguay have a civilian-led Ministry of Defense. While Brazil's was only established in 1999,

Uruguay has a longstanding Ministry of Defense that is not only led by a civilian minister but also has a robust staff of civilian cadre. Brazil has experienced a growing level of expertise among civil society—especially in academia and advisory think-tanks—but there has not been an established career track for civilians to work within the Ministry of Defense, something that should be addressed.

Both countries of the Southern Cone have been unable—or unwilling—to repeal amnesty laws that continue to provide impunity for human rights abuses during their respective authoritarian regimes. While Uruguay has had some success prosecuting a handful of perpetrators, the population has twice voted down by referendum a repeal of amnesty, a vote that President Mujica respected. In Brazil, President Lula da Silva was unable to launch a truth commission but then saw his successor, President Rousseff launch and then conclude a truth commission that allowed Brazil to grieve its past. The truth commission did not permit crimes to be prosecuted, however, and in both countries this issue is still outstanding. Both Brazil and Uruguay are assessed as *Medium-High* for their democratic oversight of their militaries.

Democratic oversight in El Salvador requires a reform of its Ministry of Defense to place more civilian leaders in the chain-of-command between the president and military generals. Furthermore, there is limited legislative oversight of the military and successive governments have done next-to-nothing to address or atone for egregious human rights abuses by the government during the civil war. Had this assessment been made only months ago—in the summer of 2015—the grade would have been a definitive “Low”; however, a recent law passed by the legislature to impose a security tax to fund President Sánchez Cerén’s plan, *El Salvador Seguro*, is a very positive first step. Its implementation must be closely monitored to ensure taxes are collected and that corruption is avoided. At the moment, El Salvador’s democratic oversight is assessed as *Medium-Low*.

While a weaker civil society seemed to be a leading driver to weaker democratic incorporation of the Salvadoran military, the leading impediment to its democratic oversight is a combination of its civil society and its underdevelopment. As was noted in the case of Uruguay, funding and staffing a Ministry of Defense is an expensive endeavor

for a state. Uruguay is one of the few Latin American nations to be deemed a “High Income Level” country by the World Bank. It is a state that has a rich population with high tax revenues and high state capacity across all of its institutions, especially relative to El Salvador. It is not surprising, then, that El Salvador—an underdeveloped and poor country—has not developed the institutions of positive civil–military relations that are present in Brazil or Uruguay.

3. Military Effectiveness under Democracy

In terms of military effectiveness under democracy, it would be easy to surmise that a higher defense budget yields a more effective military, or, put another way, that a country “gets what it pays for.” The comparative analysis of this thesis has found that phrase to be only partially true. Brazil, the Latin American nation with the largest defense budget, uses its military in a number of capacities and, according to the Brazilian Army Commander, is a force that operates on “two poles.” Similar to the nation as a whole, the Brazilian army seems to be torn between desires of becoming a force capable of power projection abroad and one whose global aspirations are routinely interrupted due to its role as a pacifying force at home. In order to achieve its desired role as a regional and global leader, and in order for Brazil’s democratic government to “get what it pays for,” there must be a reduction in the Brazilian military’s use as a “handyman” for the various shortcomings of state capacity domestically. Brazil’s military effectiveness under democracy is assessed as *Medium*.

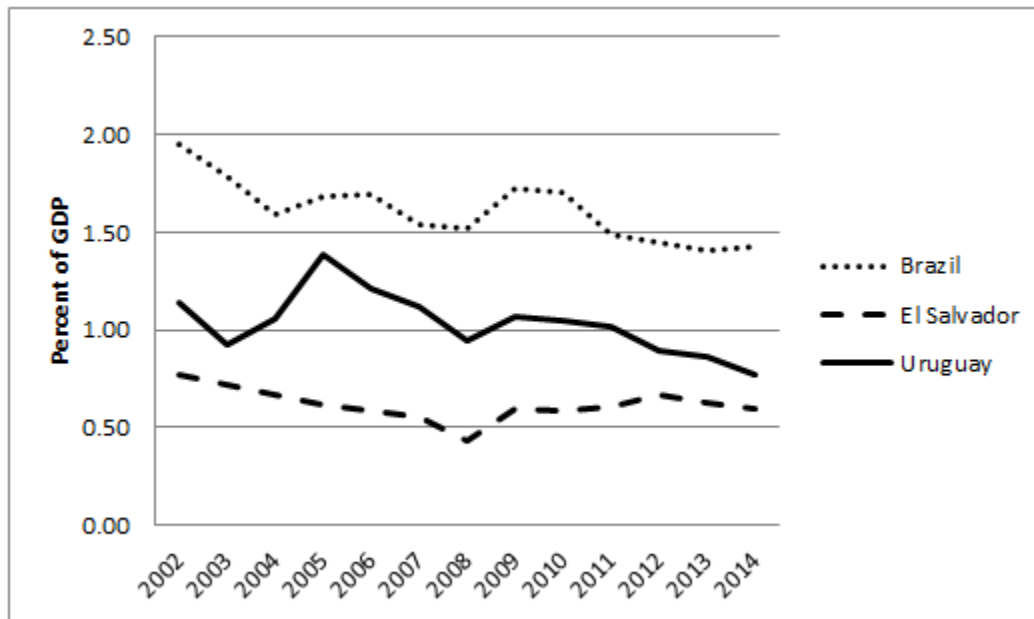
In neighboring Uruguay, the armed forces are a much smaller and leaner force with a more narrow set of roles and missions. Uruguay pays significantly less than Brazil for its military but smartly employs them as a capable and respected peacekeeping force abroad as well as sparingly in support of other state agencies providing public works and environmental projects. Additionally, Uruguay does not dispatch its military in support of law enforcement agencies; its military effectiveness under democracy is assessed as *High*.

Military effectiveness is a relative bright spot of civil–military relations in El Salvador due to a military that has been widely engaged in international operations while

developing a very high level of public trust. There is the concern, however, of severe underfunding—especially considering the array of missions its civilian leaders demand. Furthermore, there is a phenomenon of the elite in El Salvador taking it upon themselves to hire private security, highlighting the lack of confidence in the state—especially the National Civil Police—in providing public security. In the case of the Salvadoran military, it could be said the state actually gets *more* than it pays for. El Salvador’s military effectiveness under democracy is assessed as *Medium*.

Figure 5 illustrates the wide differences in defense spending among the three countries, shown as a percent of the Gross Domestic Product.

Figure 5. Defense Budgets as Percent GDP



Adapted from the International Institute for Strategic Studies (The Military Balance)

In terms of military effectiveness, there appears to be a dual-gain in military participation in operations abroad. All three countries have sent troops in support of UN Peacekeeping Operations. Furthermore, El Salvador sent members of its armed forces to join the U.S.-led coalitions in Iraq and Afghanistan. Engaging in international operations is a source of pride for these Latin American nations and can elevate its foreign policy

agendas as well as bring in additional funding to equip and modernize its forces. Additionally, especially for nations whose militaries were feared or despised twenty or thirty years ago, engaging in operations abroad can restore dignity and respect to the military profession as well as regain public trust. This is most notable in post-civil war El Salvador and is a valuable lesson for other nations and their militaries.

4. Summary of Results

Table 3 summarizes the results of the comparative analysis, resulting in Uruguay setting an example for the achievement of positive civil–military relations:

Table 3. Summary of Results

	Democratic Incorporation of the Military	Democratic Oversight of the Military	Military Effectiveness under Democracy	Grade
Brazil	High	Medium-High	Medium	Medium-High
El Salvador	Medium-Low	Medium-Low	Medium	Medium-Low
Uruguay	High	Medium-High	High	High

C. CONCLUSION

To conclude this comparative analysis it is worth a brief step back in time. The year 1980 can seem a lifetime ago—in fact, it is before the birth year of the author of this thesis—but it was also a pivotal year in the lives of the three ex-insurgent presidents analyzed in this thesis. Consider...

In 1980, Dilma Rousseff had been released from three years imprisonment where she was brutally tortured and finally released back into Brazilian society. She had been expelled from her role as an undergraduate student but, under the opening—or *abertura*—of civil society by the military government she returned to study economics and was nearing completion of her degree. Things were getting better in Brazil but it would be several years before democracy would be restored.

Meanwhile, in El Salvador, Salvador Sánchez Cerén was a rising leader of the recently founded Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front. The 12-year civil war had just begun with a horribly bloody year. Over 11,000 Salvadorans were killed in 1980 alone, and peace would not be established for eleven more long years.

Finally, the year 1980 in Uruguay would go perhaps unnoticed for José Mujica. After being captured his third time, Mujica was just over half-way through his total of thirteen years of imprisonment—including some in solitary confinement—under the civilian-military regime that would not come to close until 1985, the year Mujica was released.

Despite the dim prospects for democracy in 1980, Brazil, El Salvador, and Uruguay did transition away from violence and authoritarianism. Not only have all three held dozens of peaceful elections without relapse to military rule, all three have had political power shift between opposing parties and even had formerly illegal and insurgent politicians run for and win political office. While it may have seemed impossible thirty-five years ago, former insurgents have become presidents through democratic elections in each country.

The underlying message of this study can be summarized as a hopeful one of political progress and reconciliation. The underlying message is that, through carefully constructed institutions of democracy—as well as through political participation and compromise—ideological differences that drove adversaries to arms have subsided over time. Nations with ongoing insurgencies in the region can take note of lessons learned in all three cases analyzed in this thesis to craft an environment for positive civil–military relations—an environment with strong institutions, inspired leadership, and civil discourse. The process is not easy or fast, but well worth the effort.

APPENDIX: LATINOBARÓMETRO POLLING DATA

Latinobarómetro- 2013	Brazil	El Salvador	Uruguay	LATAM Avg
La democracia es preferible a cualquier otra forma de gobierno	48.5	48.7	70.9	56.2
Confianza en poder judicial-mucha/algo	41.2	23.8	48.7	29.5
Confianza en policía- much/a/algo	43.8	38.8	51.1	40.7
Confianza en fuerzas armadas-mucha/algo	67	70.4	54	49.6
Confianza en fuerzas armadas-poca/ninguna	30.3	38	40.9	38.3
Las fuerzas armadas deberían gobernar--muy en desacuerdo	49.3	16.5	42.2	27.9

Adapted from Latinobarómetro Public Opinion Database, (Banco de Datos, 2013),
<http://www.latinobarometro.org/latContents.jsp>

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